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AN

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

MILITARY FORCE

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE,

WITH A

VIEW TO ITS RE-ORGANIZATION.

ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT.

BY

Lieut. Colonel R. T. WILSON, K. M. T.

If I fail on the Thames, and ſplit my Veſſel on an Anchor; in caſe there be no Buoy to give Warning, the Party ſhall pay me Damages: But, if the Anchor be marked out, then is the ſtriking on it at my own Peril.

Lord Strafford's Speech.

LONDON:
Printed for the AUTHOR;
AND SOLD BY T. EGERTON, AT THE MILITARY LIBRARY,
NEAR WHITEHALL.
1804.

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AN ENQUIRY, &c.

SIR,

AT this moment, when public attention is ſo much excited to the military force of the empire; when the Government encourages enquiry, that the moſt efficacious means may be traced for the increaſe of the army, and the amelioration of its eſtabliſhment, apology for any communication upon the ſubject would be wearisome courteſy; at the ſame time, as the enquiry involves matters of high importance, and yet of the moſt delicate character, I feel it incumbent on me to prevent the cenſure which might be attached to the publication of this treatiſe, by obſerving, that manuſcript memorials ſeldom are preſented to the eye for which they were deſigned, and that the ſubordinate agents of office too often preſume to judge of the merits of the memoir, and decide for their ſuperiors, whether

 their

their time ſhould be occupied by the peruſal of them.*

Now if my remarks be unworthy of attention, they will never intrude upon your notice; but if the public attach to them any conſideration, they will be introduced under ſuch patronage, as will enſure the deſired deliberation upon their practical expediency.

Much of what I have to urge muſt be repetition of arguments frequently applied, and probably better expreſſed; but I ſhall endeavour to be conciſe, where the ſubject has already and recently been treated; truſting for indulgence, when I dwell upon points, which may be novel to many, but in which all will, I truſt, feel the moſt generous intereſt.—I premiſe that my object is no more than what I profeſs,—the eſtabliſhment of our military force upon a foundation which may be commenſurate with our wealth

* France owes the diſcovery of many of her beſt Generals to the cuſtom of tranſmitting memorials to the *Bureau de Guerre*. Hoche was, from this circumſtance, ſelected by Carnot to the command of the army There may be much time conſumed in peruſing unintereſting memoirs, but the cuſtom does afford the beſt opportunity to aſcertain the talents of officers.

and

and rank in the ſcale of nations, and conſiſtent with the principles of Britiſh liberty, and unſophiſticated philanthropy. Conſcious of the integrity of my intentions, I ſhall defy the hoſtility of prejudice, and ſpurn the inſinuations of calumny; but happy ſhould I be indeed, if any repreſentation of mine ſhall contribute to ſecure that interference which has been too long withheld, but for which the preſent epoch preſents the moſt favourable occaſion.

The heterogeneous ſpecies of force which compoſe the preſent military ſtrength of this empire, are claſſed under the heads of Volunteers, Militia, Army of Reſerve, and Regulars. By the extraordinary energy of the nation, an armed body of 500,000 men have aſſembled to learn military exerciſe, and defend the country in caſe of invaſion. At the firſt enumeration of this number, it muſt appear to ſuperficial obſervers, that invaſion no longer could be hazarded, even if the battalions of this force were alone deſtined to oppoſe the army which ſhould be diſembarked. The brilliant ſucceſſes of the French national troops, at the commencement of the conteſt, have impreſſed the generality of all nations with falſe notions of the proweſs of an armed populace. The change of name and of

dreſs have deceived mankind, and the ſympathetic enthuſiaſm excited in favour of men fighting for liberty, has produced a voluntary failure of recollection as to the circumſtance of there being near 250,000 regular inſtructed troops, amongſt whoſe ranks the volunteers and conſcripts were diſperſed. Of which original force, two or three regiments only quitted the republican ſervice, and but few officers, and after the firſt year the French army was never augmented more than one fourth, ſo that in fact, theſe volunteer battalions were as well organized as any in Europe, and as fit for ſervice.

But the Britiſh volunteer ſyſtem preſents a very different formation, and they muſt march into the field under auſpices diametrically adverſe. Nevertheleſs with all the advantages which the French national armies retained, were they not beaten every where at the commencement of the war; and was not a tract of country inſtantaneouſly over-run by the allies, which if traverſed in England by a French army, from the moſt diſtant point of debarkation, would be more than neceſſary to bring the enemy to London.—And how was the retreat of the Duke of Brunſwick at laſt effected? Certainly not by force or any apparent danger.

France,

France, in all her arrogance, admits that the Britiſh are a brave people; ſhe expects, no doubt, the moſt vigorous reſiſtance which a nation jealous to defend their native country, but unprepared with a regular military defence can offer; ſhe is no novice in that ſpecies of oppoſition, and has learnt full well to appreciate the full powers of what ſhe has termed the levy en maſſe; but with all that knowledge, with the conſciouſneſs of near 500,000 armed volunteers being enrolled in Great Britain, and all the terrible conſequences of defeat, would ſhe heſitate to diſembark her armies, if the ſafe paſſage of the Channel could be ſecured? Fortunately government does not entertain a too confident opinion of the invincibility of the force collected for the defence of the empire, as our perſevering blockade for ſo many months evinces.

It is to be hoped that what Marſhal Turenne ſaid will be found true, if notwithſtanding our fleets the enemy ſhould land, "that the *bon Dieu* generally takes the ſide of the moſt numerous battalions," for a miracle muſt be indeed worked, if any early ſucceſs otherwiſe prevents a conſiderable French force from penetrating very far towards the capital, if that point be their object.

If the French were once to entrench, there can be no doubt but the volunteers might, and would then diſplay their courage with certain proſpect of victory; but armed peaſants, under a proper diſpoſition, and with ſupport from the regular army, would aſſault, with the ſame gallantry, and almoſt equal probability of carrying the lines. A forward movement of that nature is different from field operations. Energy, not order, would be required from the maſs, and the conteſt, hand to hand afterwards, would, on every account, be in favour of the aſſailants. But in an extended ſphere of warfare, when movements muſt be made with regularity, notwithſtanding heavy momentary loſs, battalions muſt have not only gallant officers to encourage them by their example, but of ſome reputation, on whoſe ſteadineſs, preſence of mind, and judgment they can rely, and which qualities are only to be obtained on actual ſervice. The beſt troops, under different circumſtances, behave very differently; with ſome officers they chearfully undertake the moſt formidable danger, no aſpect of death daunts their reſolution, nor can carnage throw the ſurvivors into diſorder; but the very ſame troops will preſent a ſpectacle of the moſt unworthy cowardice, when led into action by thoſe for whom they entertain no military conſideration.

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I do not arrogate for the officers of the army ſuperior courage, or am ignorant that the greater part of the volunteer officers poſſeſs the higheſt feelings of honour, and natural ſpirit. I know that they are fellow-men, fellow citizens, and have been educated in the ſame notions of manly character; but is not the novelty of action ſufficiently extraordinary and agitating as to require their whole attention for their own individual demeanour, without expecting from them the reſponſibility of commanding others? And would not the anxiety of the men probably terminate in irreſolution and panic, when they find themſelves in a new danger, without the appui of confidence to invigorate their minds?—nor could they be juſtly ſtigmatized as cowards. Ignorance cannot demand the homage which is the right of experience.

He who ſtudies the hiſtory of mankind, knows that it requires the powerful ſtimulus of example to infuſe the energy of an active courage, which capacitates men to advance againſt danger, when their natural paſſions are not operating; and that the ſtrong graſp of diſcipline and long habits of obedience can alone ſecure the ſteadineſs of the maſs in perilous exigencies.

Active courage and reſignation to inevitable death, are very different efforts of the mind. The moſt abject people will die with calmneſs, nay, apparent indifference. Nations have ſubmitted to ſlavery, torture, and individual extirpation, but, nevertheleſs, dared not to riſe upon the handful of their oppreſſors. The annals of the world teem with inſtances of even warlike nations being ſubjugated by ſmall but well diſciplined armies. The rebellion in Ireland is a remarkable proof that experience and confidence in officers was requiſite, and the more recent events in India eſtabliſh the fact, that immenſe numerical ſuperiority and equal perſonal courage are unavailing againſt troops compoſed of the ſame nations, but officered by thoſe whoſe capacity to command was not problematical.

Many, unacquainted with the operations of war, preſume that the uſe of the truly Britiſh weapon "the bayonet," would compenſate for this deficiency, and imagine that the *inclination* to engage in cloſe action enſures the *opportunity*. Perhaps I may fail in correcting this opinion, but nevertheleſs the idea is altogether erroneous. An able and active enemy will, in an encloſed country, mock ſuch an attempt, and

in

in ſecurity mow down the hordes of aſſailants. The invention of gun-powder has facilitated the enterpriſe of invaders, by elongating the otherwiſe overbearing weight of numbers, and unleſs the French, deſpiſing the advantage of ground, and raſhly confident in preſumed ſuperiority of ſkill, venture upon Saliſbury plain or ſome other particular open tract, it can only be after the moſt frightful loſs (indeed too frightful for the beſt troops) that the intrepid ſurvivors reach their ranks. But are the neceſſary qualities for this heroic determination, and indifference to ſacrifice ſo inſtantaneouſly acquired? Are previous habits, the comforts of life, and endearments of exiſtence, from which they have been ſo recently ſeparated, ſo ſoon forgotten? Does the mere inveſtiture of a Britiſh uniform endow with all the ſplendid military virtues? Are the influence of a military life, a particular train of conſequent reaſoning upon the object and chances of the profeſſion, the habitude of conſidering a premature death as preferable to diſgrace, a cannon ball a better deſtiny than the ordinary terminations of life, the perpetual practice of obedience, but imaginary advantages, without which the ſame reſults may be produced? Are ſubmiſſion in moments of difficulty, and patience under all privations, no longer to be conſidered as the

conſe-

conſequences of diſcipline, or are we to believe that the Britiſh volunteers are favoured with præternatural powers to exhibit theſe phœnomena, in oppoſition to every acknowledged principle. Had an enemy landed in this country before the army had received its reinforcements, a fatal proof to the contrary would aſſuredly have been manifeſted, and even now the errors of the eſtabliſhment may only be corrected after a ſevere experience of their exiſtence. The creation in time of danger of an amphibious force partially partaking of the military character, but inceſſantly maintaining the nature, and appuying itſelf upon the rights of the citizen, is no more than an artifice to impoſe by a return of numbers, but is in fact a body affording no real protection to the ſtate.

When a government has formed a ſufficient regular army to oppoſe the force which menaces to attack her, then the addition of an armed population will enſure a decided ſuperiority, and materially contribute to ſhorten the conteſt, but until the regular army is completed, all parochial military eſtabliſhments counteract the propoſed object, and encreaſe the difficulty of providing an efficient defence. Such an extenſion of the volunteer ſyſtem is alſo ruinous, ſince a whole

nation

nation muſt march to repel an invaſion. Nobles, gentry, manufacturers, artizans, peaſants, muſt all leave their homes, their occupations, and their families, whereas a well regulated defenſive force would probably prevent invaſion, and at all events ſecure the empire from the uneaſineſs and inconveniencies of this expenſive, and after all, non-military array.

But, if the ſyſtem is to be perſevered in, ſuch amendments as can be introduced, certainly ought to have immediate effect. The evils which may be remedied, ſhould not be continued, unleſs the whole eſtabliſhment is propoſed to lapſe by their operation.

All the laws and regulations which have been enacted for the organization of the Volunteers hitherto, have ſolely regarded the corps of great towns. The ſyſtem of arrangement in the metropolis has been the baſis for all the volunteers of the country, without any conſideration of that diſtinction which a different order of men and local cauſes had created, and which muſt be conſulted if the Government be deſirous of the permanence of this force.

The volunteers of London may be properly regi-

regimented: there is no great fatigue in marching from any part of the City to Hyde Park; but when men are required to march ten miles to a regimental parade, which frequently occurs in the country corps, (and even a greater diſtance,) I ſhould imagine that the greateſt Martinet would not require much attention to duty upon the ground of exerciſe; nor can theſe harraſſed men feel much zeal for inſtruction when they arrive at their journey's end.

Many great evils ariſe alſo out of ſuch a formation. Since rank was laviſhed with ſo profuſe a grant, few gentlemen will condeſcend to take a regimental commiſſion below the rank of Field Officer; whereas, if each great land proprietor or gentleman of conſideration in a county would aſſemble his own tenantry and dependants within their reſpective pariſhes, he muſt be ſatisfied, if not feel a pride, in heading theſe men as their captain, and his connexions and friends would not imagine themſelves degraded by holding, under ſuch circumſtances, an inferior commiſſion: the men would readily ſeize every occaſion to aſſemble; every one capable of bearing arms would take a muſquet, and a feudal attachment would, in a great degree, ſuperſede the neceſſity for any martial control.

But

But when country volunteers are regimented, the reſpect and affection for their own particular officers is abſorbed in the enlargement of the eſtabliſhment; whilſt the commanding officer, or the adjutant, who is in moſt caſes the efficient commandant, cannot poſſibly ſubſtitute an equal principle of action. Gentlemen finding themſelves without any reſponſibility, neglect attendance, and gradually withdraw altogether.

It would be lamented that corps were ever regimented, if the high rank which has been granted to unprofeſſional men was the only bad conſequence: ſo many ſelf-evident evils are connected with this miſtaken indulgence to gratify falſe pride, that men unacquainted with the ſecret ſprings of Government muſt be aſtoniſhed at the motives which influenced their conſent; but actual warfare being the moſt ſerious of all human operations, ſhould never be offered as a ſubject for folly and levity to play their antics with, and when the conteſt is about to be for ſuch an awful ſtake as our Country, private political projects ſhould never interfere with the defenſive arrangement, much leſs expoſe to injury the public ſervice.

The volunteers aſſuredly now prefer to be directed

directed by their own chieftains; but in the day of battle will they inſiſt upon theſe leaders retaining the command? When life is upon the die, will they collect votes for their retention from thoſe who might with great willingneſs and propriety commit the Conſtitution to their diſcretion? But let us not believe that gentlemen would inſiſt upon high military rank to gratify a vanity which cannot give them any additional real diſtinction; that they ever required, as the *ſine qua non* of their ſervices, the admiſſion of this dangerous and indecent encroachment upon the military profeſſion.

It is ſingular that in the arrangement of the volunteer force thoſe precautions were ſo avowedly neglected, which, from practical experience, were found eſſentially neceſſary for the regulation of all armies; that for a remote warfare meaſures of precaution ſhould be taken, which in one of ſo much more importance are deemed inſignificant.

Six years muſt an officer ſerve in the Britiſh army before he can obtain the rank of a Field Officer, before he is eſteemed as qualified (notwithſtanding all that time he may have been on actual ſervice) to undertake the reſponſibility of the

the command which attaches to his ſituation; but the volunteer at once aſſumes the rank of full Colonel, by virtue of which high ſtation he commands nearly every regiment in the king's ſervice; and if invaſion abſolutely ſhould take place, may find himſelf in the command of an army.* It is no counter-argument that his diſcretion would induce him to conſult officers of intelligence. He has a power, which ought to be delegated to no man, unto whom ſuch a charge could not, conſiſtent with the rules of the ſervice, be committed. That there may be heaven-born generals among the volunteer officers is poſſible. In the French Revolution there were many proofs that there may be great officers without a regular initiation into the army, but ſuch incidents do not juſtify ſo wide a deviation from eſtabliſhed practice, nor have the officers proved themſelves ſo unworthy of fulfilling their own duties. When once high rank was given, every nobleman and gentleman, of equal ſtation in ſociety, required the ſame conceſſion, and thus jealouſy became the true lever of the miſchief which puts authority and reſpon-

* It is extraordinary that a Clauſe in the laſt Bill for regulating the Volunteers poſitively directed, that no officer under the rank of a General Officer ſhould in any caſe command them.

ſibility

ſibility where there is no poſſible experience, and prevents the militia and the volunteers from being commanded by gentlemen of the country.*

The volunteers of London and great cities ſhould alone be regimented.

The volunteers of the country ſhould only be formed into companies, and be commanded by thoſe on whoſe eſtates and by whoſe influence they are raiſed.

All volunteers ought to be exerciſed upon one ſyſtem, and the companies numbered in each county, ſo as to avoid diſputes about precedency.

In caſe of actual ſervice, the companies when called out ſhould be united, according to the exigency of the occaſion and the convenience of the ſervice, as regiments, under the direction of the ſenior officer, with the rank of major-commandant.

* There is no body of men more liberal than the officers of the King's army. If the bad conſequence of a precedent could be avoided, there is not one who would object to the introduction of an individual who has diſplayed great talent and high courage.

When

When neceſſary, ſuperior officers from the regular army ſhould be appointed, at the diſcretion of the general, to conduct and command the corps before an enemy.

If amongſt the volunteer officers there are any properly qualified from having been bred in the army, or who may have ſhewn particular military talent, or ſtudied attentively the theory of war, no doubt the general would gladly employ them; but the power ſhould be veſted in him of appointing ſuch commandants on particular ſervices, as he may judge the beſt calculated to effect his objects.*

There ſhould be no exemptions; for as it is the natural right of every man to defend his property, ſo is it one of the primeval laws of ſo-

* A colonel, with one aſſiſting officer, is appointed now to command a brigade; but if each was worthy to be a general in chief, the united ſervices of theſe individuals could not avail much in an action. How can one or two men command three or four thouſand, when the regimental officers are all inexperienced. The ſtation is a very difficult and ſerious one.

It is diſcovered that colonels are not of ſufficient rank to command the volunteers as was propoſed, and therefore they are now all to be made brigadier generals. Such already is the effects of the clauſe in the late act, which decides that the volunteers are too diſtinguiſhed to be commanded by field officers from the king's army.

ciety that every citizen ſhould defend his country. This principle was acknowledged in the freeſt republics, and it is applied in its moſt ſtrained conſtruction to our naval armaments. The principle is ſo juſt, ſo equally beneficial, that no reſiſtance ever could be oppoſed to the meaſure being enforced; but if particular privileges be attached to this perſonal ſervice, which in their effect are injurious to the community, then and then only that becomes a grievance, and muſt be altogether abandoned, which otherwiſe would have proved one of the moſt ſatisfactory and impartial modes of affording ſecurity to the ſtate. Men are wanted for other important ſervices, and if ſuch a large body of the people be exempted from contributing to the providing of them, an unfair impoſition is laid upon thoſe who from a variety of reaſonable and even commendable cauſes have not enrolled themſelves.

Every houſe-holder ſhould be obliged to provide and keep a ſtand of arms in good order. Every man in the empire ſhould be inſtructed in the uſe of them, and in a ſhort time the humbleſt individual would be aſhamed if he did not know the neceſſary exerciſe. Military ardour is very readily infuſed, but the purſuit muſt not be attended with great inconvenience or expence. Nor ſhould any danger be apprehended to the govern-

government from a people thus trained. Miſchief only prevails when large bodies of armed men having a nominal organization, which is formidable but to their country, aſſemble to deliberate, and acknowledge no control but that which emanates from their committees.

Military clothing is not neceſſary for ſuch a force. The eye may not be equally gratified, but appearance is not worthy a moment's attention. With the preparations for a conteſt, which ought not to laſt weeks, what has the attire to do? What advantage does a ſplendid dreſs offer to the ſtate? Where are the funds for ſupplying this expenſive equipment? How will the volunteers reconcile themſelves to appear in common dreſſes, when uniforms can no longer be procured by voluntary contributions;—either the public muſt provide, or they will retire in diſguſt. If, however, ſome uniformity of appearance, and ſome diſtinction of dreſs be the general wiſh, why not introduce a coat, which, for convenience, colour, and wear, might become the uſual habit of the peaſantry. A grey cloth faced on the collar with a little piece of the county coloured facings, might be found ſufficiently gay, and become univerſally worn. Ruſſia duck trowſers to pull over the common dreſs would always give a cleanly appearance, and a cockade

in a round hat would be a ſufficient diſtinction. The non-commiſſioned officers might have, in addition, particular badges to be worn when on duty, and all contributions ſhould be expended in ſhoes and great coats. If the volunteers of the cities chooſe to wear fantaſtical dreſſes, there is no reaſon why they ſhould not be indulged. The expence benefits the revenue, and as they are in general perſons of property, they can afford to buy for themſelves what their fancies approve.*

No volunteers ſhould have tents, or indeed the army in England. Camp equipage is unneceſſary in ſuch a ſervice, and may be highly detrimental. Each volunteer company is now allowed a cart to carry baggage. What a Perſian array will be their line of march!† What a fatal indulgence may this not prove!

Baggage is an abſolute injury to an army inſtead of being a benefit. All movements are impeded, and one-third of an army occupied in guarding and conveying it. Would France have conquered as ſhe has, if in the early

* In one corps a private's dreſs coſts 18l.

† The Perſians had open country to paſs through. The baggage of the volunteers of the army muſt be confined to turnpike roads where two waggons cannot move abreaſt.

part

part of the war ſhe ſuffered her officers to have more baggage than they could carry on their own backs? Would the diſgraceful capitulation after the battle of Marengo have been made, if the preſervation of the baggage had not been preferred to fortreſſes and honour? And who is there that would not be aſhamed to inſiſt upon having more than a knapſack.* When the Engliſh marched to Cairo, was there a murmur heard on that account: and what officer of that illuſtrious army would not hide his head, if from an attention to ſuch comforts ſucceſs had been an hour delayed?† It is a miſtaken kindneſs, and proves that government may be too conſiderate. The counter order ſhould not, however, be deferred to the laſt moment.

The yeomanry are ſuſceptible of the ſame improvements. Great advantage would reſult to that ſervice if the corps were at leaſt broke into

* The King, when ſpeaking on this ſubject, once ſaid, "there is no hardſhip in ſuch times to wear a ſhirt a week; but nevertheleſs, if ever the enemy come, I ſhall take the field in perſon, and my example ſhall not be wanting to encourage my people to bear privation; I ſhall begin by having only a cloak caſe to contain my baggage."

† Lord Hutchinſon himſelf ſet the moſt meritorious example in this reſpect.

ſquadrons.* At the preſent moment there is the greateſt difficulty in procuring proper officers, and to complete the required number for the formation of a regiment, all deſcriptions of perſons are admitted, without any conſideration of the principle of the eſtabliſhment. The yeomanry ſhould be men of property aſſociated together for the purpoſe of preſerving internal tranquillity, and performing thoſe irregular duties in caſe of actual ſervice, which would enable the regular cavalry to direct their whole attention to offenſive operations againſt the enemy. When parliament decreed that the yeomanry ſhould be exempted from the penalties of martial law, it preſumed, that the yeomanry were men compoſed of the moſt reſpectable claſs of the nation. But if parliament had known that the great proportion of many corps were the ſervants and loweſt labourers of farmers, without a ſhilling of fixed property, or any horſe but that which occaſionally was lent to obtain the exemption from the horſe tax, I muſt doubt whether the indulgence would have been

* I do not include in this remark the City Light Horſe, and the Corps of the Metropolis; their organization appears complete, and they ſeem to be ſo well regulated, mounted and exerciſed, that the higheſt expectation may juſtly be formed of their ſervice when opportunity is preſented.

extended

extended ſo far; and I am confident that it ought not to have been, conſiſtent with the rights of the volunteers. The yeomanry ſyſtem, as at preſent conducted, coſts the nation an enormous ſum of money, and will ſtill more, for the officers now require pay; whereas, if only the real yeomanry of the land had been admitted, no other demand would have been made upon the nation, collectively, than ſome allowance for horſe appointments and forage for the horſes when on duty. Intereſt, and former experience during the ſcarcity, would always enſure the aſſociation of the yeomen, if zeal and public ſpirit, in which they moſt aſſuredly are not deficient, ſhould not ſufficiently induce them to give perſonal aid to their country.

A yeomanry force thus conſtituted, would be a moſt reſpectable and efficient body, and afford an inſtance that the citizen and the ſoldier may be united in one and the ſame capacity, for the advantage of the ſtate, and without prejudice to the regular army.—That there are ſeveral yeomanry regiments in England fit for any cavalry duty, no perſon will deny; but the dividing thoſe regiments into independent ſquadrons would not by any means impair their ſtrength or affect their diſcipline. The ſquadrons would voluntarily aſſemble in

thoſe counties where cavalry may act in line, and exerciſe as a regiment, perhaps more frequently than under the preſent ſyſtem; and in thoſe counties where the irregular duties can only be performed, the independent organization of ſmall corps is particularly requiſite.

The gain of proper officers,* and the excluſion of unqualified men are great objects, and which can alone be ſecured by this amendment.

The yeomanry of England are the pride of the country, but under that character the loweſt claſſes ſhould not be muſtered. If a contrary ſyſtem be followed, then an horſe militia would be more uſeful and not much more expenſive. A body of national horſe may be of great ſervice, and do great miſchief to an enemy's line, although there is no experience amongſt them. The charge of cavalry is an impetuous movement, which requires the moſt powerful exertions of the riders to check when once the impetus is given, and the power of the Engliſh horſe being almoſt irreſiſtible, the riders would feel a confidence

* There requires alſo ſome additional allowance to the ſtaff. —The adjutants of yeomanry are now only allowed one horſe, although they muſt abſolutely traverſe in many diſtricts above two hundred miles to attend the ſquadron parades of their regiment, beſides attendance in the field, &c.

of

of ſuperiority in ſuch an attack,* which infantry cannot have over infantry. If cavalry be repulſed, a partial loſs only follows, ſince they can quickly withdraw from danger; whereas if a line of infantry be broken, the carnage moſt frequently is exceſſive, and certainly the ſurvivors are incapacitated from coming into action again on the ſame day; beſides, the diſorder may throw the whole army into confuſion. The yeomanry force will be highly uſeful if conducted ably; they muſt, at all events, render ſome ſervice to the country, and it would not, if properly formed, be any detriment to more general ſervice: but as to the volunteers, the battle of Zama, by which Carthage fell, ſhould be a warning to England; ſhe ſhould remember that *delenda eſt Carthago* is the cry of the French, and that her relative ſituation, as to the means of defence, are very ſimilar—that the reſemblance is painfully accurate.†

MI-

* The great elevation of the rider alſo increaſes this confidence, which the common phraſe of contempt, "I look down upon you," proves: cavalry therefore ought not to be mounted on ſmall horſes.

† Hannibal drew up his army in three lines—in the front were placed the mercenaries, in the ſecond the volunteers and national levies, in the third the veterans and troops on whom he could depend. The mercenaries fought bravely, but being preſſed by numbers required ſupport from the ſecond line; but the ſecond line began to ran away, which ſo exaſperated the mercenaries,

MILITIA.

AN enquiry into the merits of the militia, when the object is to prove its inefficiency as well as deviation from the original principle upon which the militia was created, will be considered by many an invidious and arrogant attempt to depreciate the value of this force; and more particularly, since the chief arguments must be directed against the ability of the officers who command. But these times are too momentous, and the struggle which menaces too awful, for personal considerations to influence the investigation.

The militia was originally raised as a counterpoise to the standing army, and the patriot regarded this force as the constitutional check upon the infringement of British Liberty. The jealousy of monarchical encroachment has pre-

naries, that they ceased to fight with the Romans, and turned their arms upon the fugitive volunteers, slaughtering a great many. The gallant exertions and talents of Hannibal, aided by the intrepid courage of the veteran army, could not repair this misfortune; and Rome thus fulfilled the insulting menace which she had for so many years vaunted. Has England not her mercenaries (Hanoverians), her volunteers and militia, and her small corps *d'élite*—the regular army.

served

ſerved a reſpect for the eſtabliſhment, although it has long ceaſed to poſſeſs the qualities which firſt founded the claim upon the public eſtimation.

No longer are the gentlemen of landed property, influenced by motives of diſintereſted patriotiſm, zealous to hold commiſſions; on the contrary, ſo difficult are officers of any deſcription to be procured, that regiments are frequently obliged to adverti ſe in all the country papers of England that ſuch commiſſions are vacant, and that application is requeſted to be made for them. In moſt regiments, notwithſtanding this invitation to the multitude, which may be compared to the parable of the Wedding Feaſt, there are ſtill ſeveral vacancies, and for which there are no candidates.

That there are individual gentlemen of the moſt ample fortune and conſequence in militia regiments, excluſive of the colonels, is admitted; but I ſpeak of the ſyſtem collectively, and I am not afraid of hazarding an aſſertion to be denied, when I ſtate that there is in general more wealth, landed property, and high connexion in the regiments of the regular army, than in the militia corps; and that the militia is of the two ſervices the moſt

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mercenary; ſince the King's officers pay large ſums of money to have the mere honour of belonging to the profeſſion, as the pay does not return annuity intereſt for the purchaſe money.

The partizans of the militia cannot advance an argument to prove, that this force is likely to protect the liberties of the people more than what is called the king's army; and indeed he muſt be an ignorant obſerver of theſe times, who apprehends that the bayonet will ever be applied to force royal prerogative, beyond its preſcribed limits. Iron is not the metal of which, ſince the time of Cromwell, the maſter-key to the ſanctum of freedom has been compoſed.

The military organization of the militia is of that nature, as to be defective of the firſt principle of military character. Does the militia officer command any real military reſpect from the ſoldier, for the ſervice he has ſeen, and the conduct he has manifeſted in the day of battle? Does that affectionate attachment ſubſiſt between them, which a participation of hardſhip and danger always creates? Does the confined character of the ſervice inculcate or cheriſh thoſe high ſentiments of honour which excluſively belong to the military profeſſion, or may not the

general

general ſervice be ſeriouſly injured by officers having high rank, who are inadequate to command, as never having had an opportunity of learning the practical part of their duty. If theſe queſtions be anſwered in the affirmative, which they muſt be, then the ſame arguments apply to the militia, which already have been uſed againſt the volunteers; and ſo much the ſtronger, as the eſtabliſhment is much more expenſive, and materially affects the recruiting of the army, as well as excluding many of the better order of men who are required for the regimental ſtaffs. Mr. Windham was the firſt member who dared to avow ſimilar ſentiments, and although a partial unpopularity may have been the conſequence, ſtill the good ſenſe of the propoſition will daily gain friends to the meaſure, and in the great debt the country owes to his patriotic courage, and luminous counſel, this propoſal will not be noted as the leaſt of the items.

Strange and fearful times are approaching.—On Britiſh ground muſt Engliſhmen, within a few years, if not ſooner, conteſt for the future poſſeſſion of the ſoil. This is the arena, if Buonaparte lives, where he will combat for the empire of the world. He comes not like a thief in the night to pillage and depart, but he blazons forth his mighty preparations, his demand is

Eng-

England, and he braves in pride of daring our fierceſt reſiſtance.

It is idle, it is criminal then, to ſuffer the views of the ſelfiſh, or the antiquated notions of an originally falſe reaſoning, to predominate againſt the poſitive ſecurity of the country.—When French garriſons quarter on our houſes, what ſatisfaction will be derived from the recollection that a ſpirit of independence had prevented the formation of a Britiſh army. Will our poſterity be grateful to their anceſtors, when they learn that they were born in French vaſſalage, becauſe they feared the creation of a proper military force to reſiſt the invaders.—England enſlaved by Engliſhmen would be ſtill our country, oppreſſed not irretrievably diſhonoured; but who could endure the dominion of a foreign enemy, and that dominion held by France.

If we truſt the defence of the empire to volunteers and militia, we ſhall at leaſt ſuffer ruinous diſaſters, for ſuch is the miſerable effect of thoſe ſyſtems, that individual courage is of little avail, and though worthy of victory, defeat and ſhame will be the probable cataſtrophe.*

But

* I do not enter into the minor evils of this ſyſtem, but for ſome of them I refer to the publications of Captain James, an old

But if the militia cannot be altogether extinguiſhed, at leaſt every benefit ſhould be derived from it. By fixing the future eſtabliſhment at 40,000 men, the principle of reduction is acknowledged, but like the abolition of the ſlave trade, it is too gradual in its progreſs.—There are at preſent above 20,000 men anxious to enliſt from the militia into the army, notwithſtanding all the checks which the mal-arrangement of the regular army oppoſes. Why is the country not to derive immediate advantage from ſuch a voluntary offer of excellent recruits. Why are men to be forced to continue in a ſervice, which hourly will become more irkſome?—With all the efforts of government and individuals, not above 17,000 men have been raiſed this war for general ſervice. Here then would be a powerful levy of inſtructed ſoldiers, not a dribbling augmentation, which ſcarcely repairs the contingent loſſes of the army, but a poſitive and immediate increaſe of exercifed men of treble value to the new recruit.

The colonels of militia regiments poſſeſs too

old militia Officer, whoſe labours have contributed moſt efficaciouſly to the elucidation of all abuſes, and the perfection of the whole military ſyſtem, beſides having produced ſeveral very valuable Works.

liberal

liberal and patriotic feeling to object to any arrangement when the intereſts of their country are at ſtake; they rather would be animated by a generous emulation, and vie with each other for the credit of ſending to the army the greateſt number of volunteers, and the large majority would approve of a force being created which can alone give ſufficient protection to the empire.*

For the volunteers and militia this line ſeems to have been formed, and if the poet was not gifted with a ſpirit of prophecy, he has nevertheleſs correctly anticipated our ſituation.

> Non tali auxilio, nec defenſoribus iſtis
> Tempus eget.

Theſe opinions may give offence unintention-

* A nobleman, to whoſe opinion the higheſt deference muſt be paid, has, it is ſtated, declared, that he conſiders the volunteers of Scotland as equal to the defence of that part of the Empire. The Scotch are certainly a very warlike people, and the poverty of the country is unfavourable to the progreſs of an enemy; but notwithſtanding thoſe advantages, the ability of the commander, and the heroic exertions which he will make, ſtill, if a conſiderable force ſhould land, ſuch a triumph muſt at leaſt be conſidered as one of thoſe extraordinary inſtances which ſometimes occur, to prove that military theory does not always rule events.

ally,

ally, but gentlemen ſhould reaſon candidly on ſuch important ſubjects, and not wiſh to preclude diſcuſſion. The ſyſtem, not the individuals acting under it, is the object of cenſure; and let any military admirer of the volunteers and militia imagine himſelf at a poſt with theſe raw ſoldiers, let him reflect what muſt be his anſwer, if aſked by a general officer, how long he could defend it:—"The poſt is tenable ſuch a time, provided the troops will do their duty:" but if he had with him real ſoldiers, would he not confidently calculate the capability of defence, according to the locality and his means, reply with aſſurance, and determine with preciſion, the time he would maintain the poſt, without inſinuating or even harbouring the idea that the troops would retire without his particular order.

If an army ſhould go into action, which never ſaw a ſhot fired, who can preſume to affirm, that the whole may not run away at the firſt experiment;* but if a veteran army does give way, there is this certainty and advantage, that the battle has been bravely conteſted, and that the loſs of the enemy has been proportionate. Men

* The brave Frederick withdrew in the firſt action unbecomingly.

of reading and reflection ſhould not ſuffer the public vanity to ſtifle their memory, and over-rule knowledge and reaſon. England has been conquered by a foreign army, although an heroic king headed a more numerous body of equally brave men. Other powerful nations have alſo been ſubdued, for want of attention to the nature of the enemy's force by which they were attacked. Warriors can alone oppoſe warriors.

When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.

ARMY

ARMY OF RESERVE.

AS long as the acquirement of Weſt India iſlands forms the chief object of our wars, it is eſſentially neceſſary that ſome reſtraint ſhould be impoſed upon miniſters, who ſo fatally miſconconceive the true intereſts of the nation. If the force of the empire ſhould be altogether diſpoſeable, the mother country might be diſmantled in a conteſt for ſugar iſlands, which to obtain ſingly, coſts ſo much blood and treaſure; but which at a peace have hitherto paſſed from our dominion in the ſweeping article of a general ſurrender in favour of the enemy.

If the citizens be bound to defend the ſtate, a reciprocal obligation exiſts, and the government virtually contracts to provide ſufficient protection to the inhabitants. A force raiſed upon the principle of limited ſervice, but cheriſhing the military ſpirit, feeding the regular army, and directed by experienced officers, is aſſuredly a more ſatisfactory eſtabliſhment than the militia. An intermediate ſervice to encourage the zeſt for a ſoldier's life, is more particularly neceſſary if

the period of ſervice ſhould not be limited in the regular army.

In this ſchool of preparation peculiar habits are acquired. The alarm which naturally exiſts at ſo great a change ſubſides, attachment to comrades ſuperſedes the regard for former acquaintance, and ſeven men out of ten are eventually thus induced to embrace a profeſſion, upon which, without this initiation, they never would have reſolved.*

The principal check to enliſting into the regulars from the army of reſerve, is the affection which the men frequently feel towards their officers;† and in the late recruiting from the army of

* There are incontrovertible proofs of this opinion being correct. Laſt war the militia filled the ranks of our army, and whole regiments, who had engaged for limited ſervice, volunteered on the Egyptian Expedition, to extend their engagements to any part of the world. At the Cape of Good Hope there was a regiment raiſed in Scotland, and compoſed of farmer's ſons. When the Cape was evacuated 400 volunteered on to India.

† When every effort had failed to procure individual recruits from the Army of Reſerve, an order was iſſued for permitting the different corps to enter into the regular ſervice by whole regiments, when two-thirds of each corps volunteered, and all would have gone if the ſame allowances for the families of married men could have been extended to them when they quitted the Army of Reſerve, which were in that eſtabliſhment for recruiting the army inadvertently introduced.

reſerve,

reſerve, this attachment has been particularly exemplified; but if the battalion of the army of reſerve became the ſecond battalion of a regular regiment, bearing the name of the ſame county, a reciprocal identity would be eſtabliſhed, and the regret to ſeparate be conſiderably diminiſhed, ſince an interchange of officers would be frequent upon the propoſed plan, which I ſhall now ſtate, and then argue its merits:—

1ſt. There ſhould be 100,000 men raiſed for the defence of Great Britain; who ſhould be enliſted to ſerve for the ſame number of years as the regular army.

In time of peace or war, the privates, in ſuch proportion as the King might direct, ſhould return to their own homes, and follow their uſual occupations.

The whole force ſhould, however, aſſemble to be trained for two months in each year; and on every Sunday, the individuals ſhould be obliged to appear in uniform, on which day pay ſhould be granted.

The officers and ſtaff of the regiment to be kept on permanent pay.

Head-quarters to be as ſtationary as poſſible.

The officers to be taken from the regular army; and the regimental ſtaff from amongſt the garriſon battalions and from regiments of the line, who may wiſh to obtain ſuch a proviſion for good men, but who are no longer able to endure the viciſſitudes of climate, and the hardſhips of foreign ſervice.*

Enliſting into the regular army to be allowed, provided that the army of reſerve be not reduced above 70,000 men, but the recruiting for the full complement always to continue.

The Counties ſhould pay to the Government the amount of the preſent expence which the militia coſts them; this ſum to be applied to the recruiting fund of the army of reſerve.

Such is the general outline of an eſtabliſhment which cannot prove formidable to the Britiſh Conſtitution, but which the enemy would regard as a permanent and efficacious ſyſtem of defence, oppoſing to their views of conqueſt a force truly military, and laying a foundation for the inex-

* Non-commiſſioned officers and ſoldiers might alſo be placed in this army for temporary advantage.

hauſtible

hauſtible ſupply of the diſpoſeable army, and of diſtributing through the empire well diſciplined ſoldiers.—I have endeavoured to prove that on the character, talents and energies of the officers depends the good conduct of troops. The phyſical courage of human nature is univerſally upon the ſame level, but its exertion awaits the due ſtimulus which muſt be applied to the mind. It is impoſſible to have a defenſive army more reſpectably conſtituted than with officers from the regular ſervice, and non-commiſſioned officers whoſe prime of life has been paſſed in the active duties of the military profeſſion. Veterans returning to their country to paſs the remainder of their days in a manner congenial to their habits, uſefully employed to the laſt moment in the ſervice of the State, and preſenting the intereſting and noble ſpectacle of tried fidelity and courage, receiving well-earned recompence and conſideration; at the ſame time inſtructing and animating youth to enter on that career which they have run ſo meritoriouſly. Their appearance would command reſpect; the hiſtory of their lives inflame the ambition and curioſity of the young mind, and the proſpect of an honorable as well as comfortable employment in their laſt years would confirm the diſpoſition to a military life.

Theſe are the allurements which ſhould only be uſed and are only required. Go and do thou likewiſe—would then be the counſel of the parent and the feeling of the ſon.

With what confidence would not young troops under ſuch conduct advance into action! What novelty of danger could diſunite ſuch an organization; what misfortunes could be apprehended.—The mechaniſm would be ſimple but complete, and the machinery indiſſoluble.

By permitting the men in time of peace to purſue their ordinary occupations, many advantages would be the reſult. Economy when deſtructive of its future conſequences is a dangerous frugality, but in this inſtance no detriment could ariſe. The friends of public liberty would with pleaſure ſee ſo large a body of armed men returning to the duties of civil life, and the danger of a ſtanding army would be removed by this connexion with the people; nor could the Government fear the inſtitution of a force ſo privileged, unleſs a very narrow-ſighted policy indeed operates. If the Amendments about to be propoſed for the future regulation of the armed force ſhould be adopted, a better order of ſociety will be introduced, and the profligate never could aſſume any preponderance. The formation of the

the regimental ſtaffs would alſo act as a check upon any licentious diſpoſition, and diſaffection would never be engendered, if regulations were judicious and treatment humane. But no Government can long protract exiſtence by ſtanding armies, if the Nation at large be reſolved upon an alteration. The Britiſh Government can have no fears of ſuch a nature, all parties wiſh to maintain a Conſtitution which is found by experience to be the beſt practical form of government, and every man is zealous to defend his country.

* Some military men may object from the ſuppoſed diſorders which this continual varied change of character might create, but the militia did not feel great inconvenience from ſuch an arrangement; and Pruſſia owes her annual exiſtence to ſuch an eſtabliſhment. Whilſt economy is thus conſulted, agriculture and manufactures benefited, the man is alſo in a ſtate of improvement, or prevented from deteriorating by indo-

* No one, however, can approve of armed bodies deliberating or being organized under Committees. The agitation of many queſtions, not at firſt treaſonable, might produce diſorders which eventually would terminate in open rebellion, Great revolutions are moſt frequently effected without pre-intention at the moment of action.

lence

lence and inactivity. It is a miſtaken notion that a ſoldier ſhould only handle his arms; his ſtrength, health and morality require inceſſant employment, and the ſervices which are frequently required from ſoldiers in actual warfare encreaſe the neceſſity of habituating them to conſtant labour. The Guards are certainly the beſt troops in the world to beſiege a town, which however rarely happens in their ſervice, becauſe they are accuſtomed to hard work, can dig more rapidly, and carry heavier burthens than moſt other ſoldiers.*

The army of reſerve ſhould be allowed to wear their uniforms on a Sunday. The pride of appearing as a ſoldier ſhould be encouraged; and he ſhould alſo be directed to preſent himſelf before a magiſtrate, or at the church of his pariſh, if no military garriſon be in the neighbourhood, that he may be entitled, on the certificate of his proper attendance, to receive a certain allowance of pay for that day.—This regulation would tend to attach him ſtill more ſtrongly to

* A regiment ſhould alſo be accuſtomed to march againſt time. The practice is of the higheſt importance, as the power of the legs is one of the moſt eſſential qualities of a ſoldier, In general the Engliſh march very ill, although their ſpirit will, for great efforts, enable them to make extraordinary exertions.

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the military character, and enſure his decent demeanour, which ſhould be the characteriſtic of a ſoldier.

The expence of maintaining the officers and ſtaff of the army on full pay would be no very conſiderable tax upon the country, and the advantage to be derived is more than an equivalent. Indeed, if the non-commiſſioned officers were chiefly old ſoldiers, they would be entitled to this remuneration; and therefore that deduction muſt be made from the aggregate increaſed expence. But ſurely this great empire can afford to pay for her neceſſary eſtabliſhments, nor would the nation murmur, when ſervice was faithfully given to the public weal, at any ſuch diſpoſal of the public money. The pay of the army is already ſo ſmall that it ſcarcely affords ſubſiſtence: the half-pay is abſolute beggary. To reduce officers, as has been the practice, is taking advantage of the gallant ſpirit which actuates young men to enter into the ſervice, without calculating the chances of being turned out again upon the wide world, after an expenditure of, perhaps, all their fortune on an allowance ſcarcely ſufficient to ſupport life, and totally incapacitated from obtaining a livelihood by entering into any other liberal profeſſion. The reſtoration

ſtoration to full pay is very precarious and always difficult. The Duke of York, with all his efforts to employ officers whoſe ſervices he valued and whoſe condition he lamented, could not have ſucceeded to any very conſiderable extent, unleſs the war had been renewed, and even now many are not reſtored to their ſtations in the ſervice: how much leſs will he then be enabled to effect this object when he has the officers of 70,000 men to reinſtate, as has been propoſed by the late Bill. If, however, any officers can be procured from thoſe gentlemen who have quitted the army, half-pay would be a ſufficient encouragement and remuneration, ſince their leaving the ſervice is a proof that they had other means of maintenance; but if gentlemen were in employment, their admiſſion ſhould in no caſe injure the promotion of the regular officers.*

* Thoſe who were jealous of the army of reſerve being under the total control of military men, would with ſatisfaction ſee the introduction of gentlemen who had retired upon their property, and who conſequently had that ſtake in the country on which ſo much is preſumed. The beſt of the preſent militia officers might alſo be admitted into this army; ſince, perhaps, ſome retreat for them is neceſſary, as ſo few have even the income of qualification. The great importance of the meaſure to the public would juſtify even the introduction of many into the regulars with their preſent rank.

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That the head-quarters ſhould be nearly ſtationary in time of peace perhaps militates againſt former practice; but the advantages of *caſtra ſtativa* for ſuch a force, nevertheleſs, counteract the inconveniencies which are more imaginary than real.

That the counties ſhould pay the money at preſent required to maintain the militia is perfectly equitable, as otherwiſe thoſe would be charged with an additional burthen, who have been exonerated by the Legiſlature for ſome equivalent rendered to the State.

Voluntary enrolment is preferable to ballot. The ſervice ſhould be too advantageous to require any compulſive ſupport.

With a defenſive force thus organized the empire would have nothing to fear from any ſudden attack, and the enemy, aware of this ſtate of preparation, would probably be leſs inclined to hazard a war in which her maritime inferiority would always be an inſuperable obſtacle to ſucceſs in thoſe enterprizes againſt our foreign poſſeſſions, which ſhe could alone meditate.

REGU-

REGULAR ARMY.

ENGLAND has not for many years had a diſpoſeable force which could command her any reſpect as a military power. But that ſhe ſhould provide an army commenſurate with her rank in the world, her maritime empire and extraordinary wealth, is at length admitted by many of thoſe Stateſmen who moſt pertinaciouſly reſiſted the principle of Continental connexion and military interference. The uneaſineſs of a defenſive war; the agitation created by the menaces of an active, formidable and unoccupied enemy hovering upon our long line of vulnerable coaſt, encouraging the diſaffected in Ireland, and threatening deſolation and ruin whenever her arms ſhould triumph; the loſs of revenue and uſeful labour by the conſequent array of the nation have forced a more liberal and enlarged policy.*

It is not within the limits of poſſibility that

* Hannibal very juſtly ſaid, "No great country can have long tranquillity; if it has not war abroad, it will find enemies at home.

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an Engliſh army ſhould ever be of ſufficient ſtrength to carry war into France without the aid of auxiliaries and the moſt powerful allies, but if ſhe could employ 40,000 men in conjunction with the Continental Powers, and enſure the maintenance of that number, at the calculation of one half being expended each campaign, who would pretend to ſay that the Continent might not be excited, with other collateral aſſiſtance, to attempt its own reſcue from the heavy dominion of France? Who can deny that the diverſion of 40,000 men would not materially contribute to the ſucceſs of Auſtria? There are ſeveral important points where ſuch a debarkation would amply repay the expenditure of all the blood and treaſure which might enſue. Too long has the idea prevailed that the beſt efforts of England would prove but like a drop of water added to the ſea. Facts are forgotten, and judgment blinded, to continue this falſe aphoriſm. If Sir R. Abercrombie had diſembarked in Holland with 40,000 men, there is almoſt a poſitive certainty that this eſſential country had been recovered as far as the Waal. If, when Buonaparte invaded Italy a ſecond time, a quarter of the number of Engliſh troops had been but added to the Auſtrian army, would there have been a fatal battle of Marengo? I ſpeak not of the proweſs

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of the Engliſh, but of the augmentation to the Auſtrian army. That great battle was fought with not more than 40,000 troops on each ſide, and even the addition of 5000 either way would have, by abſolute force, decided the action.* Few armies meet each other in greater ſtrength, and when report ſtates 60,000 men have taken the field, there are not two-thirds of the number. The Auſtrians ſhould have opened the campaign 1794 with 180,000 men, but there were not more than 70,000. Even France ſeldom could furniſh more than 40,000 effective men to each army, and the State which can provide that number of troops would juſtly be conſidered as a moſt important ally. If England could once prove herſelf poſſeſſed of ſuch a diſpoſeable army, ſhe would not only recover the influence ſhe formerly had, but gain a preponderance ſhe never had before upon the Continent. Her ambaſſadors would not then be inſulted, her hoſtility defied, and her interference rejected with contempt. The talents of great miniſters may do much to reſtore conſequence, but with how much more

* The battle of Marengo, after it had been fairly won, was in fact loſt by an unaccountable panic.

† Conſequently all the plans of General Mack, which had been framed for the action of the large number, failed.

ſucceſs

ſucceſs if they could ſhew England in this warlike attitude.*

There is no country in the univerſe where finer materials can be collected for an army. Bravery is the national characteriſtic, and the ſpirit of freedom exalts this virtue to its higheſt elevation. The people are well made, active, and muſcular. The breed of horſes is the beſt in the world for cavalry ſervice,† and the great wealth in the country, with the excellence of workman-

* In Cobbett's Weekly Journal of the 22d of June, there is a moſt excellent letter upon the ſubject of a ſtanding army, which merits general peruſal. Indeed that able writer has ſince the commencement of his undertaking, diſplayed ſuch admirable talent, and reaſoned with ſo much judgment and perſpicuity on the whole military ſyſtem, that he commands the utmoſt attention. His intrepid and patriotic expoſition of the errors of the volunteer eſtabliſhment has ſecured to his name the moſt honorary recollections, and the effect of his ſervices will be permanent as long as Hiſtory records the events of theſe times.

† Foreigners pretend, and many admirers of every thing foreign, that the Engliſh horſes are not ſufficiently upon their haunches—but who ever heard of a battle being won by Caracols? The ſuperiority of the Engliſh horſe conſiſts in ſtrength and action; an animal able to move with 18 ſtone upon his back with greater rapidity than any other horſe in the known world.—Skirmiſhing may be amuſement, but the impetus of the charge alone makes cavalry terrible.

ſhip, commands the moſt complete military equipment. At the commencement of every war however, an entire new army is to be created; whereas any increaſe, above one-fourth of the original army, is contrary to all true principle.

Several years elapſe before ſuch a force is collected as may undertake any offenſive meaſures; and hitherto the nation, tired with an unſucceſsful ſtruggle, have inſiſted on peace juſt at the moment that an army was formed which might repair former diſaſters.

The expedition to Holland was a melancholy proof of the want of ſuch pre-arrangement; and the laſt year of the war only ſhewed a regular army which might properly receive ſuch an appellation.

It is true, that ſo long as the Weſt India iſlands are to be garriſoned and attacked,* there never

* Above 100,000 of our beſt officers, ſoldiers and ſailors periſhed laſt war in the Weſt Indies. Why ſhould not troops be raiſed for colonial ſervice, from the various countries bordering on the Mediterranean; a ſhort capitulation would induce numbers to enliſt, and Malta might be the depôt. I once propoſed to Government, in caſe Alexandria had been retained, that Æthiopians ſhould be recruited for this purpoſe. They are

never can be any hope of a great force being collected for European ſervice, nevertheleſs improvement ſhould perfect what there is, and the army which England pays ſhould be in the beſt poſſible condition.

If Engliſh ſoldiers were not endowed with more than ordinary reſolution, inſtead of having acquired great honour for their country, they would have loſt all the pretenſions to character, which had been earned in ſo many former ſtruggles; but who can conſcientiouſly aſſert, that the Britiſh army has not every where upheld the glory of their country? Who can arraign it with ever failing in its duty, notwithſtanding the reverſes it experienced? The fact is, that our expeditions are planned for the employment of a certain number of troops, but no arrangement is made for the inſtantaneous ſupply of thoſe loſt in action.* The hearts of men

are a brave, faithful and warlike people, and great numbers annually come to Cairo, and are diſperſed through Aſia. The Cairo Bey of the Mamelukes was an Æthiopian, and would have honoured any nation.

* The expedition to Egypt was the only one which ſucceeded, and that was ſucceſsful againſt all moral probability. At the ſame time I muſt here obſerve, that an obſervation in my Hiſtory of the Expedition to Egypt has been quoted, by the author of Curſory Remarks, and which was not introduced by me to criminate Miniſters for ſending ſo ſmall a force, but to

 ſhew

men muſt be very ſound which could ſtill beat high after they found that all the efforts of their courage were unavailing, as the advantage of that ſucceſs, which in the day of battle they had ſo dearly bought, could not be retained.

When the Duke of York firſt came to the high ſituation he now holds, the character of the army was depreſſed below mediocrity, every abuſe exiſted which could depreciate the profeſſion, and repreſent the Britiſh military in the eyes of Europe as inſignificant from their feebleneſs, and contemptible from the mal-adminiſtration of the ſervice. The Duke boldly undertook the difficult taſk of reſtoring its conſequence, and extirpating the prevailing evils, and he has ſucceeded by inceſſant perſeverance and able regulations, be-

ſhew the actual want of information. It is but juſtice to obſerve, that I never propoſed to inſinuate a charge on this account, as I knew that Egypt was a country ſo peculiarly ſituated, and intelligence ſo difficult to be procured from thence, on account of the ignorance of the Turks and natives, that the number of French troops in the country was never aſcertained until the ſurrender of the laſt fortreſs, Alexandria, and that previous calculation did not equal the number by ſeven or eight thouſand men. If then this difficulty occurred when in the country, with all the power to enforce, and the inclination on the part of the inhabitants to give intelligence, there can be no blame attached to Miniſters at home for not having correct returns.

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yond the hopes of his moſt ſanguine friends.* There are, however, ſeveral obſtacles to his complete ſucceſs, which can only be removed by attracting the attention of the public to them. But before this ſubject is treated upon, the means of procuring a regular army ſhould firſt be examined.

In order to appreciate the propoſed plan duly, the checks to recruiting muſt be firſt aſcertained, and I have no doubt that they are comprized in the preſent ſyſtem of enliſting for life, and the frequency of corporal puniſhment.

It is ſtrange, that in a free country a cuſtom ſo repugnant to freedom—as enliſting for life—and the particular character of the Britiſh Conſtitution, ſhould ever have been introduced, but more ſingular that the practice ſhould have been continued after every other nation in Europe had abandoned it as impolitic, and as too ſevere an impoſition upon the ſubject.

If in thoſe countries, where the inferior order of ſociety are born in vaſſalage, and where the will of the Sovereign is immediate law, this power has

* The Duke is too noble-minded to receive, and I am too proud to offer flattery, but it is impoſſible to ſpeak of the improvements in the army, without rendering the credit due to his exertions.

been relinquiſhed in order to incline men voluntarily to enliſt; ſurely there is ſtrong preſumptive evidence that the general intereſts of the ſervice are improved inſtead of being injured by this more liberal conſideration. For however requiſite ſuch an amendment is upon the principle of due attention to the rights of men, ſtill, unleſs the effects were not more directly beneficial to the Government, there is no ground to ſuppoſe that in many States the experiment of reformation would have been hazarded. The advantages which would accrue to the Britiſh army are obvious; numbers would enliſt who are now reſtrained by the apprehenſion of being fixed for life to a particular ſervice, which at one period might be deſirable, but at the expiration of ſix or ſeven years may, from a variety of cauſes, ceaſe to poſſeſs the ſame inducements. The chief alarm of parents would ſubſide,* and curioſity, pride, and an averſion to ſervile labour would almoſt ſuperſede the neceſſity of any bounty. A better claſs of men would embrace the profeſſion: and thoſe who quitted at the expiration of their capitulation would not only be ready and capable

* Every officer knows that excellent recruits are withdrawn from the ſervice by parents, who would wiſh their ſons to *ſow their wild oats* in the army, but who cannot reconcile themſelves to the idea of their engaging for life.

to aſſiſt in the home defence, but virtually act as ſo many recruiting ſerjeants for the army.*

The independence of an Engliſhman naturally recoils at the proſpect of bondage, which gradually produces diſcontent againſt the bent even of inclination. How many men are there who have now not the fainteſt wiſh to leave their own eſtates, even for a journey into another county, but who, if reſtrained by any edict from quitting England, would find this iſland too narrow to contain them, would draw their breath convulſively as if they craved free air, and feel all the mental anguiſh of the priſoner in a dungeon. What is the inference to be now fairly drawn from the perſeverance in the ſyſtem of enliſting for life. Is it not that the Britiſh ſervice is ſo obnoxious and little conciliating, that if the permiſſion to retire were accorded, the ranks would be altogether abandoned, and the ſkeleton only remain as an eternal and mournful monument of the wretchedneſs of a ſoldier's condition? Is it not a declaration to the world that the ſervice is ſo ungrateful to the feelings of the ſoldiery, that when once the unfortunate victim is entrapped it is neceſſary to ſecure his allegiance by a per-

* Some years muſt conſequently elapſe before this effect can be complete, but the advantages may be fairly calculated upon in anticipation.

petual ſtate of confinement? Such muſt be the concluſion which the preſent ſyſtem would ſanction, if the deſire of enliſting even under the preſent diſcouraging circumſtances did not offer poſitive counter evidence.* I feel confident in the aſſertion, that nine-tenths of the chief officers of the army would recommend the limitation of ſervice as to time, and equally ſo, that in this caſe the want of men would never embarraſs the Government, whoſe ſole attention would then be required to provide the means of payment.

The only objection which is ever advanced againſt the alteration, is founded upon the difficulty of arranging the army in our Colonies. But in time of war this inconvenience would ceaſe; and in peace ſurely there is no difficulty

* The enliſting of the militia laſt war, the diſpoſition of the army of reſerve, all of whom would have entered into the army, if the ſame allowances for their families could have been continued, and the preſent deſire of the militia, are proofs that innate ſpirit counteracts in a ſtrong degree the reſiſtance which the ſyſtem oppoſes. The experiment of limiting the time of ſervice would by no means leſſen the ſupply which the preſent mode furniſhed to the army, becauſe men who are diſpoſed to enliſt for life would gladly enliſt for a ſhorter period. The chances are therefore in favour of the alteration; nor would the proſpect of ſoon quitting the ſervice cauſe an indifference to character, but, on the contrary, increaſe the value of a good name.

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to make perpetual changes if neceſſary, ſince our large fleets are continually paſſing and repaſſing. But if the inconvenience ſhould be ſtill greater, it never can be of ſufficient magnitude to counteract the benefits of the meaſure. The officers of Government may have additional trouble and buſineſs, but the redundant ſupply to the army, its tribute to juſtice, and the brave efficient ſervants of the public, will enſure returns more than equivalent to any expence or augmented employment.

It is however to be hoped, that the day is not remote when our Colonies ſhall ceaſe to be ſuch a claim upon the active population of this country: That charnel houſe muſt be cloſed for ever againſt Britiſh troops.—The ſoldier who dies in the field is wrapped in the mantle of honour, and the pall of glory is extended over his relatives; but in a warfare againſt climates, the energy of the man is deſtroyed before life is extinguiſhed; he waſtes into an inglorious grave, and the calamitous termination of his exiſtence offers no cheering recollections to relieve the affliction of his loſs.

But even if this deſtructive ſervice ſhould be prolonged, there is the greater neceſſity for adopting that ſyſtem which may be a counterpoiſe

poiſe to the havock. If hope, the moſt durable and faſcinating paſſion of the mind be but reſtored to the ſoldier, the youth of the country will flock in crowds to their ſtandards.—It is not that a ſoldier expects a long duration of life, but human nature is not ſo ſervile as to bear with reſignation the thought of being for ever deprived of the rights of civil liberty, and the idea of perpetual ſervitude ſhould be intolerable to Engliſhmen.

The ſecond and equally ſtrong check to the recruiting of the army, is the frequency of corporal puniſhment. This is truly a moſt delicate ſubject, but when the new organization of the whole military ſyſtem is under conſideration, and has ſo much excited the public attention, a fair inveſtigation of all the impediments, and an enquiry into the abuſes which operate to the prejudice of the ſervice, becomes no longer an unwarrantable interference. Had his Royal Highneſs the Duke of York the power of controlling the exceſs or the frequency, there then could be no neceſſity to intrude this diſcuſſion. He has always expreſſed himſelf as anxious to maintain the greateſt degree of diſcipline, at the ſame time as moſt intereſted to guard the ſoldier from unneceſſary ſeverity, to make officers regulate

late by attention and not by the cat-o'-nine-tails.* But not only does an Act of Parliament give certain rights and powers to commanding officers, but the militia are altogether independent of his juriſdiction in the interior management of regiments. And if a poſitive reſtraint could be iſſued, without previous public examination, commanding officers who were checked in their practice by this regulation would attribute every diſorder in the regiment to the Duke of York's order; and it muſt indeed be admitted that any partial direction of this nature is very difficult, until the principle of the practice is combated by argument, and all its evil conſequences expoſed by reaſoning.

Be this however as it may, I feel convinced that I have no object but the good of the ſervice, and conſequently to promote the Commander in

* A ſtill greater Perſonage, whoſe principle is generoſity and practice benevolence, has alſo frequently avowed the ſame ſentiments.

Sir Ralph Abercrombie was alſo an enemy to corporal puniſhments for light offences. His noble and worthy ſucceſſor, whoſe judgment muſt have great influence, Lord Moira, General Simcoe, and almoſt every General Officer in the Army, expreſs the ſame averſion continually, but they have no power of interference.

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Chief's views, and that my feelings are ſolely influenced by love of humanity, a grateful ſenſe of duty to brave men, and not by a falſe ambition of acquiring popularity. If I did not think the ſubject of the moſt eſſential importance, no motive ſhould induce me to bring it forwards; if I was not aware, that however eager the Commander in Chief was to interpoſe his authority, that the correction of the abuſe does not altogether depend upon his *veto*, and cannot, with due regard to the peculiar circumſtances of his ſituation, be required to emanate abruptly from him. My appeal is made to the Officers of the Army and Militia, for there muſt be no marked diſcrimination between theſe two ſervices, notwithſtanding there may be a great difference, in their different modes of treating the ſoldiery.—I ſhall ſedulouſly avoid all perſonal alluſions.—The object in view is of greater magnitude than the accuſation of individual malefactors.—I ſhall not enter into particulars of that exceſs of puniſhment which has in many inſtances been attended with the moſt fatal conſequences.—I will not by quoting examples, repreſent a picture in too frightful a colouring for patient examination; but, nevertheleſs, having paſſed the Rubicon, I cannot recede from the enter-

enterprize, and the cauſe muſt be advocated with reſolution tempered by diſcretion.

The preſent age is a remarkable epoch in the hiſtory of the world. Civilization is daily making the moſt rapid progreſs, and humanity is triumphing hourly over the laſt enemies of mankind.* But whilſt the African excites the compaſſion of the Nation, and engages the attention of the Britiſh Legiſlature, the Britiſh ſoldier, their fellow countryman, the gallant faithful protector of their liberties and champion of their honour, is daily expoſed to ſuffer under the abuſe of that power with which ignorance or a bad diſpoſition may be armed.—There is no mode of puniſhment ſo diſgraceful as flogging, and none more inconſiſtent with the military character, which ſhould be eſteemed as the eſſence of honour and the pride of manhood; but when what ſhould be uſed but in very extreme caſes as the *ultimum ſupplicium*, producing the moral death of the criminal, becomes the common penalty for offences in which there is no moral turpitude, or but a petty violation of martial law, the evil requires ſerious attention.

How many ſoldiers, whoſe prime of life has been

* The Slave Merchants.

paſſed

paſſed in the ſervice, and who have behaved with unexceptionable conduct, have been whipt eventually for an accidental indiſcretion; an abſence from tattoo-beating, or even a dirty ſhirt. Intoxication is an odious vice, and ſince the Duke of York has been at the head of the army, officers have ceaſed to pride themſelves upon the inſenſate capability of drinking, but, nevertheleſs, flogging is too ſevere as a general puniſhment, for what has been the practice of officers, and alſo moſt decidedly fails in correcting the diſpoſition to drink.—Cleanlineſs is a virtue, and highly eſſential for the health of the ſoldier, but ſurely there are a thouſand ways of enforcing attention to dreſs, and producing a love of decent appearance, without having recourſe to ſuch rigor as corporal puniſhment. Abſence from quarters is a great fault, and muſt be checked; but is there no allowance to be made for young men, and the temptations which may occur to ſeduce ſuch an occaſional neglect of duty; would not confinement for an evening or two afterwards be a ſufficient mortification?

Officers are too familiarized to conſider ſoldiers as mere machines who are inſenſible to kind treatment, and on whoſe minds no reaſoning can operate; but if they would remember that man

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is an intellectual being, ſuſceptible of reflection and endowed with faculties, they ſhould at leaſt try the experiment fairly, and endeavour to aſcertain whether thoſe vicious habits to which the lower claſſes are often addicted, may not be corrected by lenient meaſures, and a frequent appeal to their character as ſoldiers. I am poſitive that the *amour propre* of man, except in very bad ſubjects indeed, is always to be excited, that the *eſprit du corps* of regiments may always be formed, and that every ſoldier may be rendered proud of his profeſſion, intereſted in the preſervation of its honour, and be ſenſibly affected by its diſgrace. Educated in the 15th Light Dragoons,* I was early inſtructed to reſpect the ſoldier; that was a corps before which the triangles were never planted, where each man felt an individual ſpirit of independence, walked erect as if conſcious of his value as a man and a ſoldier; where affection for his officer and pride in his corps were ſo blended, that duty became a ſatisfactory employment, and to acquire for each new diſtinction the chief object of their wiſhes. With ſuch men every enterprize was to be attempted which could

* No corps was ever more fortunate in their commanding officers—no corps ever behaved more gallantly on all occaſions, and the Duke of York is a witneſs of the affectionate zeal that they always manifeſted for the general ſervice and his perſon.

be executed by courage and devotion, and there was a ſatisfaction in commanding them, which could never have been derived from a ſyſtem of ſeverity.

The ſenſe of ſhame is the feeling which ſhould be worked upon unleſs the ſubject is incorrigibly depraved, and then he is unfit to enjoy the advantages of a ſoldier's ſituation, but ſhould be ſent to ſome ſtation where he could do no miſchief by the influence of his evil communication, and where he might be employed in conſtant laborious duties.

Corporal puniſhment ought to be ſo rare in the Britiſh ſervice, that whenever inflicted, ſuch an event ſhould be conſidered as remarkable, and then the impreſſion would be advantageous; but the eye is now ſo familiarized to ſuch ſpectacles, that the ſight is no longer ſickening or diſguſting, and conſequently, as indifference gains ground, hope of improvement by example muſt recede. There is no maxim more true than that cruelty is generated in cowardice, and that humanity is inſeparable from courage. The ingenuity of officers ſhould be exerciſed to deviſe modes of mitigating the puniſhment and yet maintaining diſcipline. If the heart be well diſpoſed, a thouſand different

method

methods of treating offences will ſuggeſt themſelves, but to preſcribe poſitive penalties for breaches of duty is impoſſible, ſince no two caſes are ever exactly ſimilar.

> Qui fruitur pœnâ ferus eſt, legumque videtur
> Vindictam præſtare ſibi. Diis proximus ille eſt
> Quem ratio non ira movet; qui facta rependens
> Conſilio punire poteſt.

Unfortunately many officers will not give themſelves the trouble to conſider how they can be merciful; and if a return was publiſhed of all regimental puniſhments within the laſt two years, the number would be as much a ſubject of aſtoniſhment as regret. I knew a colonel of Iriſh militia, happily now dead, who flogged in one day ſeventy of his men, and, I believe, puniſhed ſeveral more the next morning; but notwithſtanding this extenſive correction, the regiment was by no means improved.

Corporal puniſhments never yet reformed a corps, but they have totally ruined many a man who would have proved, under milder treatment, a meritorious ſoldier. They break the ſpirit without amending the diſpoſition.—Whilſt the laſh ſtrips the back, deſpair writhes round the heart, and the miſerable culprit, viewing himſelf as fallen below the rank of his fellow ſpecies, can no longer attempt the recovery of

his ſtation in ſociety. Can the brave man, and he endowed with any generoſity of feeling, forget the mortifying vile condition in which he was expoſed? Does not therefore the cat-o'-nine-tails defeat the chief object of puniſhment?* And is not a mode of puniſhment too ſevere which for ever degrades and renders abject?—Inſtead of upholding the character of the ſoldier as entitled to the reſpect of the community, this ſyſtem renders him deſpicable in his own eyes, and the object of opprobrium in the ſtate, or of mortifying commiſeration.

Military puniſhments, more ſevere than the common penalties of civil law, are undoubtedly required, the ſoldier knows well the neceſſity, but when they exceed the bounds which a due regard to juſtice and mercy preſcribes, they only deprave the mind, and operate as an encouragement to perſeverance in miſconduct. Pain will not reform; the diſcipline of the mind is far

* It is to be remembered that flogging is the common treatment, not an awful extraordinary example. If the practice of ſome militia regiments was imitated throughout all, the whole ſeventy thouſand would be flogged round in ſomething leſs than ſix years; but even the average of the common practice in many corps would reach to that amount at no very diſtant date; there are, however, ſome regiments moſt kindly treated and conſequently better regulated.

more

more efficacious than the diſcipline of the body, and how much more ſatisfactory?

It is a melancholy truth that puniſhments have conſiderably augmented, that ignorant and fatal notions of diſcipline have been introduced into the ſervice, ſubduing all the amiable emotions of human nature. Gentlemen who juſtly boaſt the moſt liberal education in the world, have familiarized themſelves to a degree of puniſhment, which characterizes no other nation in Europe.*

When a commanding officer finds diſorder in the regiment, inſtead of applying himſelf to diſcover and remove the cauſe, by prudent and conciliating arrangements, he too frequently conſiders the cat-o'-nine-tails as the only *vis medicatrix*; and by an intemperate uſe produces a general diſorganization, rendering the good bad, inſtead of amending the profligate.

How many regiments have gained admiration when paſſing in review, for their appearance and manœuvre, whilſt the high and exalted feelings

* It muſt alſo be admitted that officers who have been raiſed from the ranks are generally more ſevere than other members of a court-martial, or as commanding officers.

of the ſoldier had long been extirpated by a ſyſtem of terror? How many officers have eſtabliſhed a falſe reputation, whoſe regiſters of puniſhment ſhould have branded them with diſgrace, and rendered them unworthy of their ſtations in the ſervice?

In proportion as officers are ignorant of their duty, and unequal to the command of men, puniſhment is more frequent, notwithſtanding there are ſuch ſtrong proofs of the inefficacy of ſuch ſeverity. The 52d regiment is at this moment indiſputably one of the firſt corps in the ſervice, in every reſpect. The cat-o'-nine-tails is never uſed, and yet diſcipline is there ſeen in the higheſt ſtate of perfection. In other corps continual puniſhments are taking place on the fruitleſs attempt of rivalling the 52d, whereas the very means employed for ever prevent the poſſibility of their attaining mediocrity.

The 10th battalion of reſerve was raiſed and formed within ſix months, as a moſt complete corps, regular in its conduct, and fit for any ſervice, with only the puniſhment of three old offenders, who had come from other regiments, and none even of theſe received more than fifty laſhes. A different ſyſtem was however followed

in

in other corps, and a number of men puniſhed beyond what I feel myſelf at liberty to ſtate.*

Whence comes this indifference to our fellow ſpecies? This neglect of men, on whoſe exertions the life and character of officers muſt depend, by whoſe blood they acquire their fame, and by whoſe generous ſacrifice they expect the reward of victory?

There is a great diſtinction between the romantic theory of falſe philoſophy and practical conduct. No perſon can deny, that as in the community there are many vicious members, there muſt alſo be many bad men interſperſed in the army, whom kind treatment will not influence, and who are callous to the ſentiment of grati-

* Brigadier General Leviſon Gower was once ordered to take the command of the flank companies of the line, in which great diſorder had prevailed, and where the men had been moſt ſeverely puniſhed. He reformed the battalion, and put it into the beſt order without any flogging whatever. The 2d battalion of the 53d is now in Ireland, and in the higheſt poſſible condition, and although 1100 ſtrong, has never had but eight courts martial. Theſe are creditable inſtances, and bear unqueſtionable evidence that exceſs of puniſhment may be in moſt inſtances attributed to the miſmanagement of the commanding officer.

tude.* Profligate beings muſt and ſhould ſuffer without commiſeration, but the general principle ſhould be lenity, and the general abhorrence tyranny.

Nor does the requiſite judgment of a regimental court martial interpoſe a ſufficient check upon the ſeverity of ſome commanding officers. Young men are allowed to be members, who have never conſidered the moral effects of puniſhment; they are familiarized to ſeverity, by the recorded inſtances of their predeceſſors. They are inſtructed to conſider particular offences as forcing *de ſe*† a pre-

* A relaxation of diſcipline to acquire popularity is equally culpable, and fails of the object, ſince ſoldiers do not eſteem an officer who does not perform his duty, and preſerve good order in the regiment.

† Puniſhment affects men very differently: ſome bear a great many laſhes without ſuffering much; others would die under the ſame number. But there is a great cruelty in bringing men out at different times to receive the remainder of a ſentence as ſoon as the tender ſkin has covered former wounds. I could mention ſome terrible inſtances if evident reaſons did not check me, and if the correction of ſuch abuſes can be ſecured in future, there is no neceſſity to diſtreſs the mind with circumſtances which have had already their full operation; but only in very aggravated caſes of criminality indeed ſhould the remainder of a ſentence be inflicted at different periods,

a preciſe award, without the conſideration of a man's previous character: they are accuſtomed to truſt to the mercy of the commanding officer, when the preſence of the lieutenant colonel or the major may from the different diſpoſition of theſe officers make a variation of the puniſhment of the moſt ſerious nature; they too frequently aſſemble without a thought upon the important truſt committed to them, they hear with levity, and decide without reflection.

When General Fox commanded in the Mediterranean, he ſent back thoſe courts martial which awarded exceſſive ſentences, obſerving that puniſhment ſhould never be cruel, and that no court ſhould ſentence a ſoldier to receive more laſhes than what the members themſelves thought right to be actually inflicted.

How different were ſuch maxims and conduct to the intemperate reſentment of other officers, who have threatened courts martial with the accuſation of contumely, for refuſing to aug-

periods, particularly as the exceſs and not the preſcribed mode of puniſhment, as is frequently the caſe in civil law, prevents the execution of the whole ſentence in the firſt inſtance.

ment an already awarded ſentence, when their reaſons for lenity were but too well founded.

There is ſcarcely a general officer in the ſervice who does not lament the flippancy with which the cat-o'-nine-tails is uſed; but they have no power of preventing regimental puniſhments either in the line or the militia.

England ſhould not be the laſt nation to adopt humane improvements; France allows of flogging only in her marine; for men confined together on board ſhip, require a peculiar diſcipline, and the puniſhment is very different from military ſeverity. The Germans make *great* criminals run the gauntlet, a mode of puniſhment by which every one of their comrades becomes their corrector, and thus a greater opprobrium is inflicted; but in their courts martial a private always ſits where a private is to be judged, and a non-commiſſioned officer when a non-commiſſioned officer is the priſoner. It is true that a field officer may order his ſerjeant to inflict upon his own authority, for petty miſdemeanors thirty blows with a cane; a captain, twenty; a ſubaltern, twelve; but as this puniſhment is inſtantaneous, the offender eſcapes impriſonment, and his comrades

comrades have, in conſequence no additional duty.*

The introduction of that practice of ſtriking ſoldiers might not be congenial to the ſentiments of Engliſhmen, who are accuſtomed, from infancy, to conſider trial as previouſly neceſſary to any execution of puniſhment; but it is abſolutely neceſſary that there ſhould be ſome reviſion of the military penal code, as it is faulty in many reſpects. No doubt it is eaſier to deſtroy than to build; but the defects are ſo palpable, and the improvements ſo evident, that there is no fear of the attempt at reformation failing. In the interim, I preſume to propoſe that the following regulations would materially contribute to diminiſh the frequency of corporal puniſhment.

No officer under age ſhould be allowed to ſit as a member of a court martial.

All witneſſes ſhould be ſworn to evidence.

No commanding officer ſhould ſend back a

* The Germans have an horror of being tied up to receive puniſhment. In a German regiment, in our ſervice, where puniſhment was very rare, two men deſtroyed themſelves to avoid this increaſed diſgrace.

ſentence

ſentence for augmentation of corporal puniſhment.

Commanding officers ſhould be inſtructed to avoid as much as poſſible the ordering of courts martial for ſlight offences, but to uſe their own diſcretion as to the direction of offenders ſuffering the minor puniſhments;* ſuch as impriſonment, temporary marks of diſgrace, increaſe of fatigue duty, deprivation of all food but bread and water, &c.

That with every general return a ſtatement of the offences committed, the ſentences of the courts martial, and the inflicted puniſhments ſhould be tranſmitted to head quarters; and that there ſhould occaſionally appear in the general orders of the army ſome remarks upon the extent or diminution of crimes and puniſhments grounded upon theſe reports.

Such preventive checks would not be diſ-

* Artaxerxes uſed to whip ſometimes only the garments of the culprits, and many a man has been ſaved to the ſervice by only ſuffering the diſcredit of the preparation, and who afterwards has declared, that if a laſh had been given he never ſhould have regarded his future conduct.

pleaſing

pleaſing to the officer who regulates his regiment upon proper principles; on the contrary, he would feel laudable pride in this expoſition of the good conduct of the corps, which the army would attribute to his management; but the reſiſtance of the unqualified and ſevere would afford an additional argument for interference with their at preſent ill-conſided authority.

If every officer would read "Beccaria on Crimes and Puniſhments," he would not only have his mind expanded, but become practically a better man, and be more ready to regard with indulgence the infirmities of human nature. *

* I certainly did moſt ſtrenuouſly urge the propriety of flogging two volunteers in the Weſt of England, one of whom had ſtruck his officer on parade, and the other had encouraged this act of mutiny; independent of the magnitude of the offence, it was eſſentially neceſſary to make ſuch an example on ſo favourable an occaſion. The men were puniſhed; and Sir John Kennaway, in whoſe corps they were, ſhewed a firmneſs and zeal for the public ſervice which did him the higheſt honour. It is not every gentleman who would have undertaken the reſponſibility of inflicting the firſt puniſhment, and at all events riſquing his popularity in the county. The good ſenſe of the majority of the volunteers, however, prevented any ſuch conſequences.

THE

THE inliſting for life being altogether abo-liſhed, and a different practice of puniſhment introduced, a redundance of recruits would ſoon come forwards for the army, and the anxiety of parliament would not be excited about a bill which after the operation of a twelvemonth, will not gain more than 13,000 men; a force which in modern days is of no ſignificance, and which will not repair the common wear and tear of the army in Europe without a continental war. If men be thus raiſed by driblets, England can never have a diſpoſeable force, for the ſupply is not equal to the preſent expenditure; and yet ſhe muſt levy above 30,000 men to complete the preſent military eſtabliſhment.

If the militia was reduced, or even the men allowed to enliſt until there were not more than 40,000 men left, the army might then derive advantage from the action of the new bill; but at beſt it is only an half meaſure, not equal to

to the exigencies of the times, and not in any degree qualified to aſſiſt in the relief of the continent. Nevertheleſs, as the military regulations do not emanate from the executive government, but form in detail ſubjects for diſcuſſion before a tribunal where there is a predilection in favour of, or prejudice againſt particular advocates, and where the majority of the judges muſt be ignorant of all military principles, where no military axiom, however poſitive in its nature, has not been controverted, there muſt be always great difficulties in the way of new propoſitions, and impediments to complete arrangement, which never perhaps can altogether be removed, and which no miniſter, even to preſerve his own credit, can publicly notice.

But all parties ſeem diſpoſed to approve of the enliſting for a ſhorter term of years, and the meaſure cannot be too ſoon ſubmitted for their ſanction.

The firſt engagement for the infantry ſhould not exceed ten years.* A bounty ſuperior to the bounty for recruits in the army of reſerve ſhould

* The boy regiments for India ſervice could be raiſed upon a diſtinct ſyſtem.

be

be given; but no man enliſting for that ſervice ſhould have more than the difference, otherwiſe men would always enliſt there in the firſt inſtance to ſecure double bounty.

At the expiration of this ſervice, if the ſoldier preſented a certificate of good conduct, he ſhould be entitled to all the civil rights and immunities of the citizen.

The ſecond engagement ſhould not exceed ſix years. The ſoldier ſhould receive additional bounty, and wear ſome badge of diſtinction, if his previous conduct had been meritorious.

The third engagement ſhould alſo be for ſix years, and in addition to bounty and an additional badge, he ſhould be exempted from all duties of fatigue, and for the remainder of his life receive a penſion from government.

If from caſual ſickneſs he ſhould be ordered from foreign ſervice, to do duty until his recovery in the army of reſerve, that time ſo paſſed from his regiment ſhould not be deducted from the period for which he engaged.

But

But no ſoldier leaving the diſpoſeable army to enliſt in the army of reſerve without directions from the commander in chief, in conſideration of peculiar reaſons to prevent his continuance in the regular army, ſhould be entitled to the penſion.*

The bounty to be given at each engagement to be of the ſame value, and not to exceed ſix guineas for the man who is enliſting.

The period of ſervice for the cavalry ſhould be more extended in the firſt inſtance, and alſo for the artillery. In both caſes, longer time is neceſſary for their inſtruction; and they enjoy advantages and comforts of which the infantry ſervice does not admit. Three years are requiſite to make a complete dragoon. Their capitulation ſhould therefore be not for leſs than fourteen years, and inſtead of dividing their ſervice into three portions, it would be more adviſable to require only two from them; thus divided, the time might be fourteen years and eight years.

* In a memoir of this nature detailed arrangements are not neceſſary. The admiſſion of the principle is the object, and the minor regulations are eaſily traced.

The

The artillery is a peculiar branch where the mind muſt in a certain degree be cultivated by mathematical ſcience;* a particular arrangement ſhould therefore be formed for that ſervice, of which I am not competent to hazard a further opinion. But as the public pay to the phyſician and counſellor high fees, not as appreciating the value of the immediate advice given, but in conſideration of that time which was expended without any immediate gain, in the proſecution of ſtudies neceſſary to qualify them for their profeſſions, ſo has the ſtate a right to demand an equal return of ſervice from thoſe for whoſe inſtruction ſhe is at a great expence, and who ſhe is maintaining a conſiderable time without any reciprocal benefit.

I cannot conclude theſe remarks upon the

* The Britiſh artillery is a moſt reſpectable body, and on all occaſions the corps has done its duty with the greateſt intrepidity and zeal. It appears ſingular that the officers who have more ſcientific inſtruction than the officers of the army, and whoſe practice muſt give them great knowledge of ground, ſhould be reſtricted from ſerving as general officers with the line when they attain that rank. Such ſervice could not injure the artillery eſtabliſhment, and the general ſervice muſt be benefited by the introduction of officers ſo well qualified.

means

means of recruiting, and the better arrangement of the regular army, without mentioning, that the Duke of York has, by his perſonal influence and perſeverance, within theſe two months, effected a meaſure which he has long meditated, and which is as creditable to him as it is juſt to the veteran whoſe manhood has been devoted to the ſervice of the country.

Until this time, the ſoldier who from long and faithful ſervice was no longer enabled to perform his duty in the regiment, and of courſe unequal to gain any other livelihood by his labour and induſtry, received the pittance of 7l. per annum, which ſcarcely could give him maintenance. His unavoidable diſtreſs rendered his laſt days miſerable, and he involuntarily appeared as the beacon of national ingratitude, warning all to avoid the ſervice of a ſtate wherein his gallant bark had been ſhattered for her defence and glory, and which refuſed her aid to bring the wreck into port. There were a few individuals who received a ſhilling per day, but ſo few that the bounty was ſcarcely a benefit.

The commander in chief has finally ſucceeded in extending this allowance to all old ſoldiers

who are diſcharged, and recommended as meriting the liberality of the country.*

* In addition to this great advantage for the army, an aſylum for the children of ſoldiers, and the military academy, have both been founded during the Duke's adminiſtration. Theſe are noble improvements, and confer laſting benefits.

GUARDS.

GUARDS.

IN re-organizing the army ſome attention ought to be paid to the enormous encreaſe of the Guards which bears very hard upon the regiments and officers of the regular army. Although the Ruſſian army conſiſts of 480,000 men, there are only 10,000 guards, including the cavalry. In Pruſſia there are but 4000 guards to an army of above 250,000 men. In Auſtria not ſo many, although the privates of the Hungarian guards are all noblemen, in an army of near 400,000. Whereas in our ſmall military eſtabliſhment there are conſiderably above 10,000 Guards.

When it is remembered, that theſe Guards never ſerve in the Eaſt or Weſt Indies, the extenſion on that account alone would not be deſirable, as throwing ſo much more duty upon the regulars; but the augmentation moſt ſeriouſly affects the rank and promotion of the officers of the army, ſince the promotion of the Guards is not only extraordinarily rapid, but to preſerve them as effective battalions all their major generals are immediately and neceſſarily employed, notwithſtanding the claims of much older and experienced officers who have done their duty in all climates.

That the King's houſehold troops ſhould have particular privileges,* that the rank of lieutenant and major ſhould only be known upon their own parades has always been the cuſtom, and is ſanctioned by the practice of other ſervices; but ſurely ſome reſtraint might juſtly be impoſed upon the extenſion of ſuch privileges, which really injure as well as diſcontent thoſe who are entitled to every conſideration. If from the facility of enliſting men, which this eſtabliſhment offers, there muſt be an augmentation beyond the original propoſed numbers, ſurely there would be no injuſtice in confining hereafter theſe exceſſive privileges of acquiring rank, (without paſſing through the regular gradations of the general ſervice,) to the officers of the old eſtabliſhment; and ſuch as may, by this arrangement, arrive within that ſelect number.

To thoſe who are zealous for the maintenance of the eſtabliſhment in all its ſplendor and character, ſuch a regulation muſt be deſirable; ſince the extreme encreaſe removes the eſtimation in

* The privileges of the guards are not confined to the encreaſed rank, but form a diſtinct code of ſervice for themſelves, which code, however, is not in writing.

The guards, at the latter part of their ſervice in Egypt, very handſomely, however, waved all privileges which might impede the general ſervice.

which

which the officers were formerly held, as being all men of fortune and high connexion, and which ought to be the peculiar characteriſtic of the King's houſehold troops.

I do not detract from their credit when I obſerve, that the Guards are not more uſeful on ſervice than other troops. The regiments of the line behave with equal intrepidity, and are as well diſciplined; but the encreaſe becomes formidable to thoſe who, having ſtudied the hiſtory of other nations, are accuſtomed to calculate paſt events as the criterion by which they may reaſon on what is likely to happen in future.

The Guards when in the metropolis are neceſſarily more diſſolute, and leſs acquainted with their officers than the troops of the line; for which reaſon, as well as conſideration to the reſt of his army, Louis the XIVth, in the ſplendor of his power, did never allow of more than 10,000 guards, notwithſtanding their cavalry was entirely compoſed of the nobility of the realm.

The great expence of this eſtabliſhment might alſo be urged, and many other topics, which are not proper for public diſcuſſion, but which all contribute to render the extenſive augmentation of the guards a ſubject for great regret.

PAY.

AFTER conſidering the means of providing the requiſite number, and the proper deſcription of ſoldiers for the regular force, enquiry naturally proceeds to an inveſtigation of the pay for that body.

The non-commiſſioned officers and privates are paid full enough and perhaps more than is equal to their wants. Proviſion at the expiration of their ſervice was only required, and the commander in chief has ſecured this allowance. But the pay for the officers having never been encreaſed, except in a very trifling degree in favour of the ſubalterns, ſince the time of Queen Anne, the ſame ſatisfactory admiſſion cannot be conceded on their account. Either the parliament in Her Majeſty's reign or our time have adopted erroneous principles. There is ſo great a difference between the value of money in thoſe days, and the preſent, that there can be no congruity between the two grants. Queen Anne's parliament voted pay to the officers equal to their

their maintenance, and the character of their reſpective ſtations. The parliament of the twenty laſt years have neither conſidered the one or the other neceſſary, but voted the allowance becauſe ſuch had been the cuſtom. If this be not the literal explanation of their vote, ſuch at leaſt muſt be the inference deduced from the effect. Is there any honeſt man who will deny that the country ſhould pay thoſe ſervants who ſerve her faithfully and zealouſly, with whoſe conduct ſhe is ſatisfied, and who often gain her approbation for voluntary exertions beyond the preſcribed contract of required duty? Is there in the ſtate one man, however great an enemy he may be to ſtanding armies, who will not agree, that the officers of the army ſhould have pay equal to the ſpirit of the original grant of parliament, and that they have a demand on account of their honeſt ſervice upon the liberality as well as the juſtice of the nation? Is there any miniſter who would pretend, that this empire would reſiſt the application of the public money to ſatisfy this debt of duty and juſtice?

What claſs of ſociety feel more than the officers the depreciation in the value of money, the increaſe of taxes upon articles of

prime neceſſity,* and the riſe in the price of proviſions.

How happens it, that all other public ſervants have had their income augmented with reference to the preſſure of the times; but that the ſalary of thoſe who are required to make the greateſt ſacrifices of which human nature is capable, ſhould not only have no addition, but be reduced five per cent. by the income tax.

Is there any income which is more entitled to exemptions, which ſhould have been eſteemed more ſacred? The profit to the country in abſolute return of money, is not very conſiderable, and the effect is highly detrimental: there is not a more loyal or generous body in the country;

* The dinner meal, which, within theſe laſt ten years, coſt only 1s. is now every where 2s. 6d.; nor can the demand of the inn-keeper be treated as exorbitant. The Chancellor of the Exchequer very properly ſtated in the Houſe of Commons, that from the preſſure of the times, and the depreciation in the value of money, there had been an increaſe of 60 per cent. of his Majeſty's houſhold expences within the memory of many Members in that Houſe. Surely then the ſame cauſes produce the ſame effect in an officer's income, and his caſe is ſtill more grievous, for the officer may loſe his liberty, his prolonged confinement eventually deprive him of his commiſſion, and the State of his ſervice.

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there are no men more ready to contribute voluntarily to the exigencies of the ſtate; but in as much as they were liberal in ſo much ought they to have been protected in their military income, which is but a life annuity, not yielding five per cent., and the life is alſo at the diſpoſal of the grantor.

If an argument frequently applied ſhould be admitted, the pay might be almoſt altogether abrogated, for the approvers of the tax, and the oppoſers to the increaſe of pay aſſert, that the demand, and the high price given for commiſſions, is a proof that the officers do not conſider their ſituation as very unprofitable, or themſelves aggrieved in the ſervice; but the principle of this reaſoning is not juſt.

Young men of fortune eagerly embrace a profeſſion which is eſteemed the moſt liberal, as being the moſt diſintereſted, and which is moſt congenial probably to their habits. Other young men attracted by the military reputation, prevail on their friends to purchaſe them a commiſſion, or embark the little property which they can command in this ſpeculation, anticipating gratuitous promotion from their merits, and in the delightful delirium of ambition, forget to calcu-

calculate how they are to provide the neceſſary income for their maintenance, until the bounty of this preſumed good fortune arrives. *

But although an increaſe of pay is not required by the firſt claſs, ſtill as the ſecond ſuffer from the want of it, the riches of one ſhould not cauſe poverty to the other. In civil life is reference made to the private property of the perſon employed? are not labour and ſervices paid for according to their own value, or is the price directed by the extra income of which thoſe employed are in the receipt?

In ſome inſtances wealth, and its attendant conſequence, founds a claim for higher remunerations, but in none does it produce a drawback, except in the army, where only a very ſmall minority have even independence.

The principal leaders of the different profeſſions would be much aſtoniſhed if they were paid leſs than they had a right to expect, becauſe their fortunes were reputed large; and if the whole

* There is another claſs who have commiſſions given, but although they ſuffer much, they muſt not openly complain. Who dare look in the mouth of a gift-horſe?

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profeſſion ſuffered on account of that individual wealth, from which they derived no benefit, would they not juſtly conſider themſelves as grievouſly injured?

Are the ſalaries of the officers of ſtate, and the public offices regulated by this principle, or is not the allowance formed upon the preſumed ſervice rendered to the country, notwithſtanding ſome are always occupied by noblemen of large fortune.*

How many eligible young men are excluded from the army by their friends, becauſe the pay is not ſufficient to afford a livelihood after the commiſſion is purchaſed. What prudence can prevent diſtreſs if the pay be the only income? Happy is he in that caſe, who never viſits again his native country, when once he has the good fortune to eſcape abroad with his regiment.

It is the intereſt of the country to pay the officers of her army liberally. Embarraſſment not only oppreſſes the individual, but tends to the

* Are not the ſalaries of ambaſſadors to be increaſed as an inducement for noblemen to accept the appointment?

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violation of that character, which is the fundamental principle of the profeſſion.

It is true that no ſervice preſents ſuch integrity and loyalty as diſtinguiſhes the Britiſh officers; pillage* and treaſon are unknown vices amongſt them;

* Perhaps the averſion to the idea of pillage is carried a little too far. In the retreat from Holland in the year 1794 and 95, many valuable works of art were left behind, which might have been taken away, but which the French did remove, and particularly ſome of the moſt valuable pictures, which are now in their gallery of Paris. Their practice of plunder was known, and therefore the fate of this intereſting property foreſeen. The Venus de Medecis was once in our poſſeſſion, but was reſtored to grace Paris; Cleopatra's needle was not brought to England, becauſe there was an apprehenſion that the Turks might conſider the removal, as an act of plunder; for the prohibition was ſent from thoſe, who were ignorant at the time, that permiſſion had been granted by the Turks themſelves. How often have the march of our armies been impeded from a regard to the inhabitants! How often have the ſoldiers abroad wanted proviſions when there was an abundance in the different farm houſes! If France, by the contribution ſhe raiſes in money and kind, can conquer Europe; if by a diſregard of the uſual practice of war amongſt civilized nations, ſhe can make the world her ſubjects, ſhe ſurely ſhould be oppoſed with ſimilar arms; for although war may be made more dreadful to the wretched natives, ſtill the conſequences would be propitious to our poſterity. It is one inſtance where honeſty is not the beſt policy, and after all ſucceſs, in public opinion generally juſtifies the means, and

them; but theſe very virtues, this reſiſtance to temptation incites as an additional intereſt in their favour, and augments the demand upon the generoſity of the nation; nor have they common duties to fulfil in return for their ſubſiſtence. Their qualifications are far above mediocrity. A virtual exile from their country—a life of hardſhip, reſtleſsneſs and anxiety, when on foreign ſervice,—a cheerful ſacrifice of all the endearments and attachments to exiſtence at the mandate of duty,—enthuſiaſtic devotion to the Britiſh glory,—the moſt incorruptible fidelity and exalted ſenſe of honour, are qualities expected from them, and which expectation they do not diſappoint.

I will not pretend that every officer in the King's army is entitled to ſuch commendations; nor is even animal courage, much leſs the *avida periculi virtus*, ſo frequent a quality as the greater part of mankind is diſpoſed to believe, but there is no order in ſociety, or perhaps any other army, in which ſo much general courage and ſo

even the moſt injured are frequently the firſt to offer a voluntary homage to the conquerors, forgetting their own wrongs in the admiration of the brilliant triumphs by which they were ſubjugated.

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many patriotic virtues are collected, as in the officers of the Britiſh army.

What general who has been on ſervice, will not teſtify that in the heat of battle, he has ſeen the pooreſt ſubaltern making exertions, as if the empire of the world was to be his prize.—In European warfare, there can be no collateral inducement beſides honour* to animate his ſenſe of duty; and in the eaſt, the Britiſh officers have in the laſt campaign well earned their rewards, as well as the admiration of every people.

The country and the ſervice alſo ſuffer materially from this deficiency of proper income to the officers.

How many excellent and experienced men quit the army at the rank of lieutenant-colonel and colonel, in order to realize the money they have laid out upon their commiſſions, influenced by the fear of attaining the rank of major general, ſome appointment, which would take from

* In Aſia the *ſpolia opima* may alſo animate to enterprize; but no troops, except in that country, obtain any prize money; even the Egyptian troops, although ſhips were taken, as well as great quantities of cannon and ſtores, have not received a ſhilling.

them

them their regimental commiſſion, and which ceaſing at the concluſion of a war, would leave them for years upon the half-pay of colonel, an income not amounting to 200l. per annum.

What an allowance is this for a whole life expended in the ſervice of the country? what feeble encouragement for men to continue their lives in the ſervice, and riſque the loſs to their families of the capital they embarked in their commiſſions. The want of good general officers is ſenſibly felt in the Britiſh army, and this is one of the cauſes which occaſions ſuch a dearth.

If the war had not broke out again, probably many general officers who had been employed all the war, and rendered moſt gallant ſervices, would have been now, and for many years to come, reduced upon this pittance, for the ſtaff could not have been encreaſed, and no extraordinary mortality was to be expected amongſt the generals who had regiments.*

If a certain income could be attached to the rank, independent of any active employment, or

* There are ſeveral General officers now in this melancholy ſituation.

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the acquirement of a regiment, another advantage would alſo reſult to the ſervice, ſince regiments might then have effective officers;* whereas the rank of major-general neceſſarily removes the lieutenant-colonel, major, or captain having that brevet rank from the corps, which may eſſentialy ſuffer from the abſence of the ſuperior officers.

Moſt officers who attain the rank of a general officer have deſerved at leaſt a decent competence, but to deny it is impolitic as well as unjuſt. The battalions of the army of reſerve, if given to ſuch general officers would be a means of proviſion, without charging the revenue; but if any battalions be once given to thoſe who have never been in the army, however reſpectable the individuals may be who obtain them, ſtill ſuch a door is open for abuſe, that eventually the army may loſe the whole advantage of this augmen-

* Regiments are not ſo profitable either, as may be generally ſuppoſed. There are but few Generals who would not prefer a certain income to off-reckonings. The payment for the freight, and inſurance of cloathing to the foreign ſtations, is alſo a moſt heavy and unaccountable drawback, when ſo many ſtore ſhips are continually paſſing, ſometimes half empty. On an average the expence is five ſhillings additional to each ſuit of cloathing.

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tation in the number of regiments. It has been done no doubt with the view of raiſing men by the local influence of noblemen of large property and high character; but nevertheleſs the benefit is not an equivalent for the violation of an honorary contract with the army.

The ſervice ſhould be ſo advantageous, that no individual could, in ſo very eſſential a degree, become neceſſary for the procuring of a ſupply of men. If noblemen and gentlemen can command, during a war, high rank, *ad libitum*, what encouragement is given to the regular officers for toiling during many years of peace through the ranks and ſubmitting to all the inconveniences of abſence, &c. from their native country and families. Beſides the rich ſhould not deprive thoſe who may be in want of the emolument and which they have a right to expect; or becauſe they are of high diſtinction aſſume command when command is alone deſirable from thoſe who have prepared themſelves for ſuch reſponſibility by regular promotion: but unfortunately no commander in chief can act altogether independently, although the whole burthen of encroachment on his own regulations is laid upon him, and this is the principal reaſon why a military force cannot be properly formed in this

country, and why ſo many unaccountable events take place in the government of the army.

Whether commiſſions ſhould or ſhould not be ſold, is a queſtion which has frequently been agitated, and muſt always remain undecided. If the militia be aboliſhed, the argument is certainly ſtrengthened in favour of the purchaſe of commiſſions to a certain extent; but all muſt agree, that the preſent plan of allowing officers to ſell only thoſe commiſſions which they have purchaſed is an excellent regulation, and which only in very peculiar caſes ſhould ever be broken. If, however, an increaſe of pay ſhould be granted, it is very requiſite that ſome precautions ſhould be taken to prevent the encreaſe in the price of commiſſions, and the conſequent injury to thoſe officers on whom Fortune has not laviſhed her bounty, although nature may have gifted them with every good quality.

The preſent check upon the ſale of commiſſions is nugatory in its propoſed effect, and highly cenſurable in its moral conſequences.* The

* An officer ſigns a paper, in which he declares, upon the ord and honour of an officer and gentlemen, that he neither pays

The honour of an officer ſhould be inviolable, and every ſubterfuge deemed derogatory to the military character. If an officer was aſked in a court of law whether he had ſubſcribed his name, under ſo ſolemn a pledge, to what was falſe, would the jury on his anſwering in the affirmative conſider him as an immaculate witneſs. It is very wrong to ſubject honourable men to ſuch expoſure; for out of the army the plea of cuſtom would be no juſtification and but partially extenuate.

The raiſing of men for rank is a very injurious meaſure, and one which makes a bad impreſſion on foreign nations, as to the compoſition of the Engliſh army. Before the preſent Commander in Chief was appointed, foreigners conceived that the only difference between a ſubaltern of foot

pays or receives, directly or indirectly, more than the King's regulation; whereas almoſt every officer has paid or received more than the ſtipulated ſum, and this practice is ſo general and ſo well underſtood, that no infamy is attached to the tranſaction. But if an officer ſhould be brought to a court martial for ſuch an offence, the ſentence muſt be caſhiering, although every member might be equally culpable. At the Cuſtom Houſe, it is ſaid, this buſineſs is better regulated: there ſtands a man who takes (for a fee) all the neceſſary oaths, as a cuſtom time immemorial, and who bears the emphatic name of the *damned ſoul.*

and a general of horſe, conſiſted in the want of money to purchaſe the latter rank. The abſolute ariſtocracy of wealth is a very unprofitable eſtabliſhment in a ſervice where courage and talents are the eſſential properties. Latterly, qualified officers have alone been allowed to obtain by theſe means promotion, but the ſucceſſors of the Duke of York may not diſcriminate with ſo much integrity, and therefore what may be made an inſtrument of injuſtice, ſhould be altogether avoided.*

* A friend of mine and of mankind wrote a very ingenious Eſſay on this ſubject, in which he recommends, that the cuſtom ſhould be extended to the navy, and all the civil inſtitutions of the country. Thus a lieutenant might become a captain of a man of war; a captain, an admiral; an apothecary, a phyſician; a common phyſician, phyſician extraordinary; an attorney, a counſellor; a counſellor, a judge; a doggrel rhimer, a poet laureat; a charge d'affaires, ambaſſador; an underling of office, chancellor of the exchequer, &c. &c. &c.

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DISTINCTIONS.

—— Non levia aut ludicra petuntur præmia.

MILITARY Diſtinction is a ſubject more congenial to the military character than an inveſtigation of pay, although in the Britiſh ſervice theſe honourable feelings have not been much encouraged, nor has this cheap defence of nations been ſufficiently eſtimated. Much has been done to deſtroy this generous ardour, to direct the attention of the ſoldier to more ſubſtantial but not equally ſatisfactory remunerations. Diſtinctions which were conſidered as ſuch, becauſe they were the appendages of meritorious ſervices, have ceaſed to retain their value ſince they no longer teſtify as the poſitive evidence of any merit.* There are now ſo many Royal uniforms in the different corps of our heterogenous army, that to ſee a regiment without the blue-facing is a matter of ſurpriſe. The Parliament of England has even been induced to beſtow the thanks of the nation

* The value of honorary rewards conſiſts in their rarity. It is even better that ſome men ſhould not receive ſuch recompences which may be their due, than that by their too liberal diſtribution the fruit of the invention ſhould be loſt.

r anticipated ſervice, where ſuch an approbation ıould only follow the moſt diſtinguiſhed good ;onduct. The army has hitherto been diſpoſed :o regard the thanks of the Britiſh Senate as a conſecrated eulogy—as the moſt gratifying and higheſt reward which could be conferred. But the ſanctity of the act has been violated, and the charm much weakened if not altogether diſſolved.*

That diſtinctions are of great uſe there can be no difference of opinion. They encourage enterprize, create a generous ardour, and ſecure the beſt affections of the ſoldiery: they produce an energy which no pecuniary remunerations can excite, and form the ſpirit which ſhould characterize the profeſſion. If a ribbon or any decoration can bring into action all the noble feelings of which human nature is

* The inference which I am about to draw is certainly not ſtrictly applicable, but it is extraordinary that the well-informed propoſer of that meaſure did not remember that the beſt hiſtorians have obſerved, that as States are declining, honours are laviſhly diſtributed. Thus when Cicero demanded for Sulpicius, who died on a journey, the ſame honours as were decreed for thoſe ambaſſadors who were killed at their poſt, it was regarded as a certain inclination of the tottering condition of the Common Wealth.

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ſuſceptible, even the philoſopher cannot deſpiſe ſuch an acquieſcence with a generous pride, ſince, although the motive may be ſelfiſh, it cannot be ſtigmatized as ſordid.

There is one military order in England—The Bath,—but it is in name only military. Thoſe who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as miniſters, ambaſſadors, or in any other department of the ſtate, or order of ſociety, are well worthy of the higheſt honours; but if they be admitted as members of a military order,* thoſe really military ſhould have ſome marked diſtinction in addition to the common decoration. Upon the Order of Bath there might alſo be a ſecond and third claſs eſtabliſhed, according to the different ſervices performed, and with reference to the command which the candidate had at the time of his rendering himſelf worthy of the diſtinction. For the ſoldiers there might be ſilver and gold medals, as are granted in the Auſtrian ſervice. But if theſe orders ſhould ever be eſtabliſhed, it will be highly neceſſary that the honours be recommended, after a due examina-

* Or rather military men introduced into the Order of the Bath ſince it was only made a military order by his preſent Majeſty.

tion of the claims, by a Council of Officers to the Sovereign through the Commander in Chief; and that the firſt ſtatute ſhould be moſt ſacredly maintained. "No political interference ſhall influence in any way directly or indirectly the deciſion of the Council. To beſtow ſuch honours unmeritedly would be, in fact, to do what Antiſthenes ſo poignantly ridiculed when he propoſed to the Athenians to make a decree, "that *aſſes* ſhould be *horſes*."

This is the moment to offer ſuch encouragement, to animate the ſoldiery unto the higheſt feelings of emulation, for the time is not very diſtant when recourſe muſt be had to every exciting principle which can augment natural courage—when every power of the ſtate, and all the energies of a great people, muſt have the moſt vigorous impulſe applied, to reſiſt the deſperate enterprize of a preſumptuous but active and warlike enemy. *

Perhaps

*. The cuſtom of granting public monuments in St. Paul's is very praiſe-worthy—but every Captain in the Navy, becauſe he has fallen in an action, ſhould not have this honour, which ſhould imply the poſſeſſion and diſplay of great talents as well as valour.—Every Colonel in the Army killed in battle at the head of his regiment in a great line, would have

equal

Perhaps many may conſider the opinions which I have advanced as arrogant, but if the facts be authentic, the concluſions natural, the improvements propoſed conſiſtent with good ſenſe, policy and juſtice, no reference ſhould be made to the prejudice of the writer from any perſonal conſideration of his rank or age; but if the effect for which I have hazarded ſome inconvenience be ſecured, I ſhall conſole myſelf with the reflection that my motives are honeſt and diſintereſted, and exult in a ſucceſs even if obtained by my own ſacrifice.*

equal pretenſions, and then the univerſality would defeat the object.—When Lord Nelſon commanding a fleet, cried out, "I will earn this day a Peerage or a Monument in Weſtminſter Abbey!" he rendered homage to both diſtinctions, and gave a ſtrong proof of the value of ſuch honorary rewards; that although the eſtimation of poſterity is the true object of great and noble minds, a feather, a title, or a cenotaph may be made an additional incentive to the moſt heroic actions. It is, however, a wiſe regulation in France, which directs, that no tomb ſhall be raiſed in the Pantheon, until the merits of the deceaſed are acknowledged, after the lapſe of ten years.

* Sir Ralph Abercromby is a memorable inſtance, that even licentiouſneſs and miſconduct is not always to be cenſured.—To the Iriſh militia he ſaid, "You are formidable only to the peaceful inhabitants of your own country;" and immediately he was removed from his command. His integrity never could be doubted: events proved his judgment, and the authority for ſuch a ſevere obſervation. No troops are braver than

than Iriſh ſoldiers, with cudgels alone, as a very gallant officer, lately killed in India, ſaid, and whoſe regiment had ſuffered much in a partial affair, " they would attack and beat at leaſt an equal number of Frenchmen who had no flints in their muſkets, or only armed with ſwords." But if General Humbert had landed with 50,000 picked troops, would he not have reached Dublin before he laid down his arms? This queſtion General Humbert put himſelf to a moſt intelligent officer, whoſe anſwer was, however, neceſſarily adverſe to his private opinion.

THE END.